Daily Report

Near East & South Asia

FBIS-NES-91-045
Thursday
7 March 1991

Daily Report
Near East & South Asia

FBIS-NES-91-045 7 March 1991

CONTENTS

NOTICE TO READERS: An * indicates material not disseminated in electronic form.

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

Inter-Arab Affairs

Egyptian, Syrian, GCC Ministers Finish Meeting 1
'Text' of Damascus Declaration *[Damascus Radio]* 1
Kuwait Minister Comments *[London KUNA]* 2
Egyptian Minister Sees Success *[Damascus Radio]* 3
Stresses Arab League *[Cairo Radio]* 3
UAE Minister Views Iranian Role *[SANA]* 4
Arab Foreign Ministers Hold Additional Meetings 4
GCC, Egypt Meet Al-Asad *[Damascus Radio]* 4
Saudis, Kuwaitis Meet Palestinians *[MENA]* 4
PLO Envoy Affirms Saudi Support *[MENA]* 4
European Troika Ministers Arrive in Damascus 5
Comment, Meet Arab Ministers *[SANA]* 5
Al-Shar', Poos Review Talks *[Damascus Radio]* 5
De Michelis Welcomes Arab Force *[Rome ANSA]* 6
'Abd-al-Majid Comments *[SANA]* 6
Delegation Leaves Damascus *[SANA]* 6

Palestinian Affairs

PLO Communique Welcomes Bush Statement *[AFP]* 6
'Arafat Sends 'Urgent' Messages to AMU Leaders *[APS]* 7
Discusses Kuwait With UK Envoy *[Algiers VOP]* 7
Qaddumi on Iraq, Israel, Nationals in Kuwait *[Amman SAWT AL-SHA'B 6 Mar]* 7

ARAB AFRICA

Egypt

Mubarak 'Concerned' About Iraqi Interests *[Cairo Radio]* 9
Prime Minister Notes Economic Reform Measures *[Cairo Radio]* 9
Defense Official Says 10 Killed in Gulf War *[MENA]* 9
Damascus Meeting Called Beginning of New Stage *[Cairo Radio]* 9

Libya

Reportage on Damascus Foreign Ministers' Meeting 10
Final Declaration Criticized *[Tripoli Radio]* 10
'Axis' May Split Arab League *[JANA]* 10
Negative Perception of Meeting Cited *[Tripoli TV]* 10
Al-Qadhdhafi Consults International Leaders 11
Receives Moroccan Crown Prince *[JANA]* 11
Receives Kim Il-Song Message *[Tripoli Radio]* 11
Meets Ghana Representative *[Tripoli Radio]* 11
Moves To Repair Al-Rabitah Complex Reported *[JANA]* 11

Sudan

RCC Welcomes Restoration of Kuwaiti Legitimacy *[PANA]* 11
University Students Criticize 'Military Regime' *[SPLA Radio]* 12
Military Source Claims Rebel Camps Destroyed *[National Unity Radio]* 12

ARABIAN PENINSULA

Kuwait

Foreign Minister: 'Arafat Contacts 'Impossible' *[MENA]* 13
State 'May' Cut Jordan, Sudan, Yemen, PLO Ties *[London AL-ZAHRAH 4 Mar]* 13
Amir Receives ICO Secretary, Turkish Envoy *[London KUNA]* 13
Amir Receives Canadian Foreign Minister *[London KUNA]* 13
Prime Minister Receives John Major *[London KUNA]* 13
'New' Resistance Group Rejects Martial Law *[AFP]* 14
Editorial Calls For Overthrowing Saddam *[Cairo AL-ANBA' 1 Mar]* 14

Oman

Minister Foresees 'Long Period' of Gulf Stability *[OMAN DAILY OBSERVER 3 Mar]* 15

Qatar

Egypt's Mubarak Calls Amir, Reviews Developments *[WAKH]* 17
Canadian Defense Minister Arrives for Visit 17
On Regional Tour *[WAKH]* 17
Meets Heir Apparent *[WAKH]* 17

Saudi Arabia

Red Cross Returns Saudi, Kuwaiti POW's *[Riyadh Radio]* 17
King Fahd Receives UK Prime Minister Major *[SPA]* 17
Prince Sultan Receives Malaysian Delegation *[SPA]* 17
Kingdom Reiterates Support for Arab League *[SPA]* 18
Palestinians Congratulate King on Liberation *[Riyadh TV]* 18
New Kind of Arab Solidarity Urged *[London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT 4 Mar]* 18
Jordan's King Said Rethinking Saddam Support *[London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT 3 Mar]* 19
Press Views Algerian, Tunisian Stances on War *[SPA]* 20

IRAQ

Spokesman Says Ten Army Divisions Disbanded *[Baghdad Radio]* 21
Claims on Civilian Death Toll, Damage Questioned *[AFP]* 21
Baghdad Radio Talks Discuss Situation 21
Country Remains 'in Control' 21
Western Media Campaigns Assailed 21
'New World Order' Attacked 22
Future of U.S. 'Lackeys' Predicted 23
Hostile Forces Cautioned on 'Divide and Rule' *[INA]* 23
Editorial Cited on 'Historic' Leadership *[Baghdad Radio]* 24
Reportage on Reconstruction, Repair of Country 25
Efforts To Restore Electricity Cited *[INA]* 25
Roads, Bridges Under Repair *[INA]* 25
Telecommunications Buildings Renovated *[Baghdad Radio]* 25
Rations Increased by 25 Percent *[Baghdad Radio]* 26
Transport Official Discusses Services *[Baghdad Radio]* 26
Rebels Say Al-Basrah Remains in Insurgent Hands *[AFP]* 26
Capture of Generals Claimed *[SANA]* 27
Clashes Detailed *[Damascus Radio]* 27
Opposition Leaders Comment on Uprising *[Munich SUEDDEUTSCHE ZEITUNG 6 Mar]* 27
SAIRI Denies Issuing Communique on Journalists *[Paris Radio]* 28
Opposition Leaders Urge Toppling Regime *[Damascus Radio]* 28
Exiled Iraqi Calls for Opposition to Saddam *[London PRESS ASSOCIATION]* 28
Red Cross Seeks Permission To Visit Provinces *[Bern International]* 29

ISRAEL

Netanyahu Interviewed on Israeli Peace Stand *[Tel Aviv Radio]* 30

Shoval: Baker Not Carrying 'Consolidated' Plan *[Tel Aviv Radio]* 31
Arab Source: Baker To Present Syrian Peace Plan *[YEDI'OT AHARONOT 7 Mar]* 31
Sharon Demands Likud Meeting Before Baker Visit *[Jerusalem Radio]* 32
Session 'Technically Impossible' *[Jerusalem Radio]* 32
Shamir Meets Inner Cabinet, Reaffirms 1989 Plan *[Jerusalem Radio]* 32
Ministers, Press React to 6 Mar Bush Address 32
Levi Sees 'Nothing New' *[Jerusalem Radio]* 32
Address Called 'Political Tomahawk' *[Jerusalem Radio]* 33
Palestinians React Cautiously *[Jerusalem Radio]* 34
Political Parties Respond *[Jerusalem Radio]* 34
Ne'eman: Speech Will Unite Government *[Tel Aviv Radio]* 35
Shilansky: Settlers Are Answer *[Tel Aviv Radio]* 36
EC Troika Arrives for Talks in Jerusalem *[Jerusalem Radio]* 36
Urges 'Bold' Initiative *[Jerusalem Radio]* 36
'Hundreds' of Housing Units Built in W. Bank *[Tel Aviv Radio]* 36
Arens Comments on Ability To Launch Spy Satellite *[Tel Aviv Radio]* 37
'Senior' Army Source Notes Problems *[Jerusalem Radio]* 37
Army Sources Comment on Syrian Missile Purchases *[Jerusalem Radio]* 37
Police Using IDF Methods in Territories *[Jerusalem Radio]* 37
One Killed in Clash With IDF; General Strike *[Tel Aviv Radio]* 37
SLA Kills 'Terrorists' in Security Strip 6 Mar *[Tel Aviv Radio]* 38
Arab Leadership Warned Against Land Day Riots *[Tel Aviv Radio]* 38

JORDAN

Foreign Minister Comments on Iran's Regional Role *[IRNA]* 39
Cited on Better Ties With Turkey *[Ankara Radio]* 40
Stresses PLO Part of Peace Efforts *[SAWT AL-SHA'B 6 Mar]* 40
King Receives Telephone Call From Mitterrand *[Amman Radio]* 40
Speaker Requests Extension of Parliament Session *[AL-RAY 6 Mar]* 40
Al-Tahrir Party Statement Condemns U.S. Policy *[AL-DUSTUR 6 Mar]* 40
Workers Suspended for Political Reasons Reinstated *[AL-RAY 6 Mar]* 41
UN's Aime Arrives 5 Mar, Meets Al-Masri *[JORDAN TIMES 6 Mar]* 41
Canada's Clark Arrives for Talks on Region *[Amman Radio]* 41
Meets King Husayn *[Amman Radio]* 42
UNICEF Warns of Epidemics in Iraq *[JORDAN TIMES 7 Mar]* 42
Groups Aiding Iraq Merge; Ramadan Grateful *[JORDAN TIMES 7 Mar]* 43
Normal Travel Reported at Jordanian-Saudi Borders *[AL-DUSTUR 6 Mar]* 43
Editorial Advocates 'Popular Liberation War' *[AL-RAY 6 Mar]* 44
Editorial on Hope for 'Sincere' European Role *[AL-DUSTUR 6 Mar]* 44

LEBANON

Al-Hirawi Sends Bush Message, Asks For Support *[Beirut Radio]* 45
Al-Tufayli Denies Connection to Hostages Issue *[VOL]* 45
Cabinet Meets, Discusses Beirut Security Plan *[VOL]* 45
Shaykh Zayid: UAE 'Will Not Forget' Lebanon *[Beirut Radio]* 45
Army Reopens Roads to East Beirut *[Beirut Radio]* 45
Fatah Denies Report on International Terrorism *[AL-SAFIR 6 Mar]* 46
Lebanese Forces To Sell Arms to Zaire, Armenia *[AL-SHIRA' 4 Mar]* 46
Army Dismantles Katyushas Directed at Israel *[VOL]* 46
Syrian Army Confiscates Weapons, Drugs *[Beirut Radio]* 46
Resistance Group Destroys Israeli Tank *[Voice of the Oppressed]* 46

SYRIA

Al-Asad Receives Kuwaiti Minister, Message *[Damascus Radio]* 47
Free Iraq Council Delegation Talks With Khaddam *[VOFI]* 47
Iran's Habibi, Velayati Arrive in Damascus 7 Mar *[Damascus Radio]* 47
Meet With Al-Asad *[Damascus Radio]* 47
Groups Issue Statement To Mark March Revolution *[Damascus Radio]* 47

SOUTH ASIA

Bangladesh

Khaleda Zia Demands Trial of Ousted Ershad *[Dhaka Radio]* 48
Siraj Urges Formation of Majority Party Cabinet *[Dhaka Radio]* 48
Ershad Supporters Abandon Rally After Warning *[AFP]* 48
Envoy to Kuwait Leaves To Resume Office 8 Mar *[Dhaka International]* 48

India

Shekhar Explains Reasons for Resignation *[Delhi TV]* 48
Additional Shekhar Interview *[Delhi TV]* 51
Shekhar Asks Janata Dal-S To Prepare for Polls *[Delhi Radio]* 51
Gandhi, Party Colleagues Hold 'Emergency' Meeting *[Delhi Radio]* 52
Gandhi Denies Blame *[Delhi TV]* 52
Gandhi Meets President *[Delhi Radio]* 52
Reactions to Chandra Shekhar's Resignation *[Delhi Radio]* 52
Further Reactions to Resignation *[Delhi Radio]* 53
Major Parties Demand Dissolution, Urge Elections *[Delhi Radio]* 53
Parliament Adjourned Until 11 Mar *[Delhi Radio]* 53
Police Detain Top Sikh Leader in Punjab *[AFP]* 53

Iran

Velayati, Hammadi Discuss Gulf Security *[Tehran TV]* 54
USSR's Belonogov Discusses Gulf With Velayati *[IRNA]* 54
Meets Va'ezi 7 Mar *[Tehran Radio]* 55
Velayati Says Gulf Security Region's Business *[IRNA]* 55
Kazrubi Stresses Cooperation With Japan *[Tehran TV]* 55
Oil Minister Reportedly Calls For May Conference *[AFP]* 55
Vice President Habibi Departs for Damascus *[Tehran Radio]* 56
Damascus Declaration Said To Lack 'Broad Base' *[Tehran Radio]* 56
Majles Warns Against Foreign Intervention in Iraq *[IRNA]* 56
Commentary Says U.S. Must Withdraw From Region *[Tehran International]* 57
Commentary Urges Gulf Regional Security System *[Tehran Radio]* 57
Paper Ponders Saddam's 'Blunders,' Future *[IRNA]* 58
Efforts To Install Pro-West Rule in Iraq Viewed *[IRNA]* 58

Pakistan

Prime Minister's Defense Adviser Resigns *[AFP]* 58
Nawaz Sharif 'Cautious' on Adopting Shari'a Bill *[AFP]* 58
Release of Indian Politician's Daughter Urged *[Islamabad Radio]* 59

Inter-Arab Affairs

Egyptian, Syrian, GCC Ministers Finish Meeting

'Text' of Damascus Declaration

NC0603143091 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 1231 GMT 6 Mar 91

["Text" of "Damascus Declaration" signed by the foreign ministers of the Gulf Cooperation Council, GCC, Syria, and Egypt in Damascus on 6 March—read by GCC Secretary General 'Abdallah Ya'qub Bisharah—recorded]

[Text] In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful: The Damascus Declaration for coordination and cooperation among the Arab states:

The Gulf Cooperation Council Arab member states, the Arab Republic of Egypt, and the Syrian Arab Republic which participated in the meetings in Damascus on 19 and 20 Sha'ban 1411 Hegira, corresponding to 5 and 6 March 1991, proceeding from the feelings of fraternity and solidarity linking them, which are the product of a genuine heritage of dedication, cohesiveness, common struggle, and a deep awareness of the unity of hopes and challenges, the identity of aims, and the unity of destiny;

In order to further their capabilities for assuming their pan-Arab responsiblities in upgrading the standing of the Arab nation, serving its causes, safeguarding its security, and achieving its common interests;

Within a framework of strict adherence to the objectives and principles established by the charters and resolutions of the Arab League, the Islamic Conference Organization, and the United Nations; out of awareness of the deep changes taking place in the international arena and the serious challenges they place before the Arab nation and because the confrontation of these challenges requires the maximum degree of coordination and cooperation among the Arab states; while they once again reiterate their position in rejecting and refusing to side with the policy of aggression, as was the case during the aggression by the Iraqi regime's troops and their occupation of the State of Kuwait, with this occupation constituting a flagrant violation of all Arab, Islamic, and international norms and rules and sweeping away many of the concepts and achievements of the common Arab action at a time when the Arab nation was, more than any time before, in need of closing its ranks and mobilizing its resources to confront several unprecedented dangers;

They declare their welcome of the liberation of the State of Kuwait and the restoration of legitimacy there, express their deep pain and extreme sorrow for what the fraternal Kuwaiti people have suffered as a result of the aggression of the Iraqi regime, and express their deep regret for what the Iraqi people are being subjected to in terms of the most abominable forms of suffering as a result of the Iraqi leadership's disregard for their interests. In this respect, they affirm that they stand alongside the Iraqi people in their ordeal and stress their full eagerness to preserve the Iraqi lands' unity and territorial integrity.

The participants emphasize their determination to try to instill a new spirit in the common Arab action and to establish fraternal cooperation among the members of the Arab family on solid bases that rest on the following principles:

First. The Principles of Coordination and Cooperation. Coordination and cooperation will be on the following bases:

1. Working in accordance with the charters of the Arab League, the United Nations, and the other Arab and international charters; respecting and promoting the historical and fraternal ties and the relations of neighborliness; and commitment to respect the unity and territorial integrity, the equality of sovereignty, the inadmissibility of seizing territories by force, nonintervention in domestic affairs, and commitment to settle disputes by peaceful means.

2. To build a new Arab order to bolster joint Arab action. The agreed-upon arrangements among the parties concerned shall be considered a basis for achieving this. The door will be left open before the other Arab states to contribute to this declaration considering the agreement of interests and objectives.

3. To enable the Arab nation to direct all its resources to confront the challenges threatening security and stability in the region, and to achieve a just and comprehensive solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict and the Palestine question based on the UN Charter and its pertinent resolutions.

4. To bolster economic cooperation among the parties concerned in order to establish an economic group among them with the objective of achieving economic and social development.

5. To respect the principle of each Arab state's sovereignty over its natural and economic resources.

Second: The Objectives of Coordination and Cooperation:

1. In the political and security fields:

A. The parties concerned consider the current stage that followed the liberation of Kuwait from the occupation of the Iraqi regime's forces to provide the best circumstances to confront the other challenges and threats the region is being exposed to, in the forefront of which are the challenges resulting from the continued Israeli occupation of the Arab territories and the settlement of Jews in them. The parties concerned believe that holding an international conference for peace under UN auspices is an appropriate framework to end the Israeli occupation

of Arab territories and to guarantee the Palestinian people's national rights based on the pertinent UN resolutions.

B. The parties concerned stress their respect for the principles of the Arab League Charter, their commitment to the Collective Arab Defense Pact and economic cooperation among the Arab League member states, as well as their determination to act jointly to guarantee the security and safety of the Arab states. While referring in particular to Article 9 of the Arab League Charter, they consider the presence of the Egyptian and Syrian forces in the territory of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and other Arab states in the Gulf region to be in response to the desire of these states' governments and to have the objective of defending their territories and as constituting a nucleus for an Arab peace force to be prepared to guarantee the security and safety of the Arab states in the Gulf region, and an example that would guarantee the effectiveness of the comprehensive Arab defense order. The parties concerned also stress that coordination and cooperation among them will not be directed against any other party, but that it can be an introduction for opening dialogue with the Islamic and international parties who respect the higher interests of the Arab nation and abide by the principles of international legitimacy, particularly those related to respecting the states' sovereignty, noninterference in domestic affairs, and settling conflicts through peaceful means.

C. The participating parties will seek to declare the Middle East a zone free of all weapons of mass destruction, especially nuclear weapons, and will work to achieve this through the concerned international departments.

2. In the economic and cultural fields: In harmony with the Arab League Charter, the Joint Defense and Economic Cooperation Pact between the Arab League states, and other agreements on joint Arab action, the participating parties will seek to:

A. Define the rules of economic cooperation among the founding parties as a first step which can be built upon with the other Arab states with the aim of expanding the scopes of cooperation.

B. Adopt economic policies whose purpose is to achieve balanced economic and social development as a prelude to the establishment of an Arab economic grouping to confront the challenges and to keep pace with the developments resulting from the establishment of major economic groupings in the world.

C. Encourage the private sector in the Arab states to participate in the economic and social development processes, including supporting the ties between the Arab chambers of commerce, industry, and agriculture and opening the doors for small and mid-sized establishments to benefit from the fruits of joint cooperation in an easy and tangible way.

D. Support the role of scientific research centers and facilitate contacts among them to enable them to prepare joint research to achieve integration in various fields.

E. Benefit from skills and human resources in the field of cultural and information exchange while respecting the ideals of the participating states and their traditions and not interfering in their internal affairs.

3. In the field of the joint Arab action establishments: Supporting the Arab League, confronting all the attempts to weaken or disintegrate it, and reaffirming adherence and commitment to the goals and principles incorporated in the Arab League Charter. This charter can be developed by adding appendices to it and by benefiting from the results of the work of the committee charged with amending the charter, including the introduction of a mechanism for settling disputes.

Third. The Organizational Framework for Coordination and Cooperation.

Coordination and cooperation among the founding states occurs to achieve the referent objectives through meetings hosted in turn by each of the participating states at the foreign ministerial level. The assistance of experts and specialists will be sought to study the aspects of cooperation to arrive at a new contractual formula for Arab cooperation among the participating states. This formula will be open for all Arab states.

Fourth. General Rules.

This declaration has been initialed in Damascus in eight orginial copies in Arabic, each of them with the same validity, on 2 Sha'ban 1411 Hegira, corresponding to 6 March 1991. This declaration shall become effective after its official ratification, and the ratification documents shall be deposited at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Syrian Arab Republic.

Kuwait Minister Comments

LD0603175591 London KUNA in Arabic 1452 GMT 6 Mar 91

[Formerly Kuwait KUNA]

[Text] Damascus, 6 Mar (KUNA)—Shaykh Sabah al-Ahmad al-Jabir al-Sabah, Kuwaiti deputy prime minister and foreign minister, has said that Kuwait is not against the people of Iraq but against the regime in Iraq, and that the State of Kuwait has relations with the Palestinian people but not with the leadership of the PLO.

In a statement to journalists after the conclusion of the meeting of the foreign ministers of Gulf Cooperation Council [GCC] countries, Egypt, and Syria here today, he said that the eight ministers agreed to hold a series of meetings after the issuance of the Damascus Declaration which was initialed today, and that those meetings will be open to all the Arab countries which believe in the contents of the Damascus Declaration.

He said that he will return to Kuwait next week and that the presence of the government with all its members in Kuwait will be decided after restoration of public utilities in Kuwait.

Regarding the convening of an Arab summit in liberated Kuwait, Shaykh al-Sabah said that a summit of the leaders of GCC countries will be held in Kuwait next December. "As for the convening of an Arab summit, no date has been set, and I believe that there is not enough trust for the convening of such a summit." Consultations will be held during the forthcoming meetings of the foreign ministers of GCC countries, Egypt, and Syria to set a suitable date for the convening of a summit of the eight countries which have signed the Damascus Declaration.

In reply to another question, Shaykh al-Sabah said that, since its founding, there has not been any assault in Kuwait on any citizen, whether Palestinian or non-Palestinian. As is commonly known, the amir of Kuwait was the subject of an assassination attempt and [words indistinct] Kuwait, and the man was not sentenced to death. I would like to reassure brother Palestinians that whoever was in Kuwait during the invasion and did not overstep the limits of hospitality and did not cooperate with the enemy will be regarded as a brother to every Kuwaiti.

He said that the delay in the return of Kuwaiti citizens to their homeland is for one reason only, which is to wait until Kuwait has been freed from mines and until public utilities, particularly electricity, are restored.

Regarding the issues to be discussed during meetings later today between the foreign ministers of GCC countries, Egypt, and Syria and the foreign ministers of Italy, Netherlands, and Luxembourg—the European troika—Shaykh al-Sabah said: We are prepared to discuss any issue submitted during the meeting, and I hope that the meetings will be fruitful for our eight countries and for the Arab world as a whole.

Regarding the return of residents to Kuwait, Shaykh al-Sabah said: The situation will be different from what it was. From now on no one will enter Kuwait without obtaining a visa. I hope that some of them do not think that they will be barred from entering Kuwait out of hatred. It would be due to our concern for them, until we can secure housing for them. Everyone knows that houses have been looted and hotels burned down; we do not want them to roam the streets.

In reply to a question on what is taking place in Iraq and on Iran's stance regarding that situation, Shaykh al-Sabah said: There are contacts between us and Iran, and our relations with them are good. I believe—and Iran has affirmed this to us—that there will not be any intervention by Iran, and it will be neutral regarding that issue. I hope that it will be as stated to us, as pledges were made.

Regarding the issuance of the Damascus Declaration, Shaykh al-Sabah said: I feel satisfied that after this declaration our Arab world will draw up its path for the future, not only for the eight countries which have signed the declaration, but for all Arab countries.

In reply to a question on whether the region's security will be confined to Egypt and Syria of whether other Arab countries will participate in the security forces, Shaykh al-Sabah said that the role of Egypt and Syria is fundamental. The two countries participated in the liberation of Kuwait, and Egyptian and Syrian blood has intermingled with that of their brother Arabs to liberate Kuwait, but security is not confined to Syria and Egypt.

Regarding the PLO's stance on the aggression against Kuwait, and whether the Kuwaiti Government still recognizes the organization as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, Shaykh al-Sabah said: Kuwait does not interfere in internal Palestinian affairs, and we have relations with the Palestinian people and not with leaderships.

Egyptian Minister Sees Success

NC0603191391 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 1615 GMT 6 Mar 91

[Excerpt] In statements to newsmen today, Egyptian Foreign Minister Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid said that the Damascus meetings of the foreign ministers of the eight Arab states have been greatly successful, particularly in outlining the views of these states on security and economic aspects and relations between the Arab states and the Arab League.

Dr. 'Abd-al-Majid added that the Damascus Declaration emphasized all these aspects. It is a very good beginning for meetings which will take place among Arab foreign ministers and experts. These meetings will be held to achieve what the declaration termed a contractual formula. He explained that there is a contractual formula binding the eight states. The other Arab states can join these states.

Dr. 'Abd-al-Majid referred to the security aspect contained in the declaration, which regards the Egyptian and Syrian forces as a nucleus for peace-keeping forces in the region. He maintained that this was an important achievement as it is part of Arab legitimacy and sanctioned by the principles and regulations of the Arab League charter, the joint Arab defense pact, and economic cooperation among the Arab states, as well as the provisions of the UN Charter. [passage omitted]

Stresses Arab League

NC0603200391 Cairo Domestic Service in Arabic 1830 GMT 6 Mar 91

[Text] Egyptian Foreign Minister Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid today stated that the Damascus Declaration for Arab coordination and cooperation, signed today by the foreign ministers of Egypt, Syria, and the Gulf Cooperation Council's six member states, has political and economic characteristics and is not a substitute for the

Arab League, especially because the eight foreign ministers have taken care to make this declaration in full harmony with the League's principles and charter.

In statements he made in Damascus, Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid added: The periodic meetings which the eight ministers will hold may take the form of a political structure, but this structure will be open to any Arab state that wishes to join it and accepts the declaration's principles and clauses.

UAE Minister Views Iranian Role

NC0703012191 Damascus SANA in Arabic 1815 GMT 6 Mar 91

[Text] Damascus, 6 Mar (SANA)—Asked about Iran's role in the new era, Rashid 'Abdallah al-Nu'aymi, foreign minister of the United Arab Emirates, told reporters that discussion is under way among the eight Arab countries, as Iran is part of the region and we are talking about Arab cooperation. He added that the Gulf Cooperation Council foreign ministers met the Iranian foreign minister in New York in September and that talk is under way with the Iranians.

Arab Foreign Ministers Hold Additional Meetings

GCC, Egypt Meet Al-Asad

NC0603130391 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 1615 GMT 6 Mar 91

[Text] At 1330 today, President Hafiz al-Asad received Egyptian Foreign Minister Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid; Kuwaiti Foreign Minister Shaykh Sabah al-Ahmad al-Sabah; Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Sa'ud al-Faysal; United Arab Emirates Foreign Minister Rashid 'Abdallah al-Nu'aymi; Qatari Foreign Minister Muburak 'Ali al-Khatir; Bahraini Foreign Minister Shaykh Muhammad Ibn-Muburak Al Khalifah; Yusuf Bin-'Alawi Bin-'Abdallah, Omani minister of state for foreign affairs; and 'Abdallah Ya'qub Bisharah, Gulf Cooperation Council [GCC] secretary general. The meeting was attended by Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar'.

The president was briefed on the meetings of the foreign ministers of Syria, Egypt, and the GCC states in Damascus, which ended by issuing the Damascus Declaration regarding coordination and cooperation among the Arab states. The discussion dealt with developments in the Gulf, the situation resulting from the recent developments, and future tasks resulting from this situation. Emphasis was laid on the responsibilities of the Arab states toward the pan-Arab issues of the Arab nation, its security, and joint Arab action.

The president expressed his satisfaction with the restoration of Kuwait and the cessation of fighting in the Gulf. He also expressed his hope that the lessons of what happened will help the Arabs to tackle their issues and to shoulder their responsibilities in a spirit of national commitment, to respect Arab pacts and agreements, and work for joint Arab action. The president affirmed that Syria will continue to support all the Arab brothers in working for the nation's pan-Arab issues and lending credence to the Arab position in the search for a just and comprehensive peace in the area.

The GCC foreign ministers expressed their great appreciation for Syria's pan-Arab and principled positions and the personal efforts made by his excellency the president in tackling the Gulf crisis.

Saudis, Kuwaitis Meet Palestinians

NC0603212591 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2031 GMT 6 Mar 91

[Text] Damascus, 6 Mar (MENA)—Shaykh Sabah al-Ahmad, Kuwaiti deputy prime minister and foreign minister, and Prince Sa'ud al-Faysal, foreign minister of Saudi Arabia, met in Damascus tonight with a Palestinian delegation comprising Khalid al-Fahum, former speaker of the Palestine National Council; 'Isam al-Qadi, chief of al-Sa'qah Organization; Abu-Musa [Sa'id Musa Muraghah], Fatah's dissident leader; and Muhammad 'Abd-al-Muhsin, former member of the PLO Executive Committee.

A MENA correspondent in Damascus learned that the Palestinian delegation will hold another meeting with Prince Sa'ud al-Faysal tomorrow morning.

It is worth noting that Shaykh Sabah and Prince Sa'ud al-Faysal are currently attending the meetings of the foreign ministers of Egypt, Syria, and the six member states of the Gulf Cooperation Council in Damascus.

PLO Envoy Affirms Saudi Support

NC0703101291 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0920 GMT 7 Mar 91

[Text] Damascus, 7 Mar (MENA)—Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Sa'ud al-Faysal this morning received a Palestinian delegation comprising Khalid al-Fahum, Muhammad 'Abd-al-Muhsin, alias Abu-Mayzar, 'Isam al-Qadi, Talal Naji, and Fadl Shururu—prominent members of the PLO Revolutionary Council.

In a statement to MENA, Abu-Mayzar said Prince Sa'ud al-Faysal stressed to the delegation that Saudi Arabia is concerned about the Palestine question and the rights of the Palestinian people. He stressed that Palestinian brethren in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the Gulf are living among their kinfolk and will receive all hospitality and good treatment. The Kingdom, he added, will not abandon the Palestine question, and will continue to support the Palestinian people until they attain their rights.

The Palestinian leaders met last night with Kuwaiti Foreign Minister Shaykh Sabah al-Ahmad.

European Troika Ministers Arrive in Damascus

Comment, Meet Arab Ministers

NC0603193891 Damascus SANA in Arabic 1735 GMT 6 Mar 91

[Text] Damascus, 6 Mar (SANA)—The European troika, made up of Luxembourg Foreign Minister Jacques Poos, Netherlands Foreign Minister Hans van den Broek, and Italian Foreign Minister Gianni de Michelis arrived here this evening. They were met at the Damascus international airport by Nasir Qaddur, Syrian minister of state for foreign affairs; the directors of the European and protocol departments at the Foreign Ministry; the Syrian charge d'affaires in Rome; the EC representative in Damascus; and the ambassadors of the Netherlands and Italy in Damascus.

In a statement to a SANA correspondent, Luxembourg Foreign Minister Jacques Poos said that the purpose of this visit is to prepare for the post-war era in the region. He added that the foreign ministers of Syria, Egypt, and the member states of the Gulf Cooperation Council [GCC] had held several meetings, as did the 12 EC foreign ministers. He noted that the purpose of the visit is to exchange views and opinions among the European states and the eight Arab foreign ministers. He pointed out that the two sides share similar views on peace and economic cooperation among the Arab states and the EC.

He described Syrian-European relations as positive and noted that Syria and the EC have a cooperation agreement. He hoped that the visit would further promote and develop Syrian-European relations.

For his part, Italian Foreign Minister Gianni de Michelis told the SANA correspondent that he hopes the visit will be fruitful and helpful in preparing for the post-war and Gulf (?crisis) era. He emphasized that the meeting among the European troika and the eight Arab foreign ministers now in Damascus will be very important in finding new formulas for Arab-European cooperation.

He noted that Syrian-Italian relations have always been good and fruitful, and have been marked by joint cooperation. He noted the current improvement in relations between Syria and the EC. He described the recent visit to Syria by the Italian assistant foreign minister on the sideline of the meetings of the joint committee for economic cooperation as very successful. He added: We are now planning for tangible economic cooperation in the next two years, and the political (?cooperation) between Syria and Italy will be, like economic cooperation, stable and fruitful.

[In a Damascus-datelined item at 1805 GMT on 6 March, Damascus SANA in Arabic adds: "The meetings between the eight Arab foreign ministers with the European troika opened this evening. The meeting was attended by the foreign ministers of Syria, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Oman, Qatar, Kuwait, Bahrain, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, and Italy."]

Al-Shar', Poos Review Talks

NC0703080191 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 0515 GMT 7 Mar 91

[Excerpt] Talks were held in Damascus yesterday among the foreign ministers of the eight Arab countries who signed the Damascus Declaration, led by Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar', and the European troika delegation which includes the foreign ministers of Luxembourg, Italy, and Netherlands and EC representatives.

The Arab and European sides exchanged views on the Arab-Israeli conflict, the Palestinian issue, security and stability in the area, and the region's development and the European role in this connection.

The European ministers expressed their pleasure that the first meeting held by the eight countries should be with the EC. They expressed their satisfaction at the positive principles and ideas included in the Damascus Declaration. They also expressed their willingness, now that Kuwait is liberated, to continue the Arab-European dialogue.

Following the talks, Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' and the troika ministers held a press conference in which Minister al-Shar', in his capacity as chairman of the meeting, welcomed the troika ministers, describing their visit to Damascus as important.

Minister al-Shar' said a number of topics inspired by the Damascus Declaration were discussed between the Arab and European sides. He added that discussion focused on cooperation between the two sides. He underlined the importance of the continued Arab-European dialogue in view of its importance for the region's stability. He emphasized the interrelation between security and stability in Europe and the Middle East, particularly after the Gulf war. He said continued cooperation among the countries which opposed the occupation of Kuwait serves the interests of both the Arab and European regions.

Luxembourg Foreign Minister Jacques Poos expressed his gratitude for the hospitality he and his colleagues found in Damascus. He also expressed his pleasure at the troika's meeting with the Kuwaiti foreign minister, whom they congratulated for his country's liberation. He pointed out that the troika delegation's meeting with the eight Arab foreign ministers aims to exchange views after the Gulf war. He asserted that the Middle East problems are being handled at an international level and that Europe will play a role in this connection.

The Luxembourg foreign minister asserted that all problems are interrelated and that they should be tackled at the international level. He underlined the importance of enhancing Arab-EC economic cooperation. He said: When I read the Damascus Declaration, I found that it

deals with problems which are under consideration at both the Arab and European levels. He added that the declaration needs to be studied in depth during the next EC meeting.

On Europe's role in holding the international peace conference, as proposed by the Damascus Declaration, he said Europe supports the convocation of an international peace conference. He added that earlier European declarations agree with the Damascus Declaration in this regard. He said: However, it is useful before holding such a conference to provide a favorable atmosphere for its success.

Asked on his view about this issue, Minister al-Shar' said: In principle, both Arab and Europeans agree on the need to hold an international conference on peace in the Middle East under UN auspices. We have said before that the best time to hold such a conference is after the Gulf crisis is resolved.

Minister al-Shar' underlined the importance of the UN resolutions for resolving the Arab-Israeli conflict and the Palestinian issue, now that the UN position has been strengthened during its handling of the Gulf crisis through the implementation of UN Security Council resolutions. He added that the United Nations should do the same thing with regard to the Israeli occupation.

Responding to a question about the current events inside Iraq, Minister al-Shar' said: It is clear that the Iraqi regime is being faced with serious resistance on the part of the Iraqi people, who are entitled to choose their own government and leadership. He emphasized that Syria is careful to maintain Iraq's territorial integrity.

Commenting on the same issue, Minister Poos said: I agree with Minister al-Shar' that the Iraqi people have the right to choose their own leadership. [passage omitted]

De Michelis Welcomes Arab Force

AU0703104491 Rome ANSA in English 1019 GMT 7 Mar 91

[Text] ANSA, Damascus, March 7—A declaration yesterday by the eight Arab countries in the U.S.-led anti-Iraq coalition of readiness to create an Arab force to ensure security in the Gulf was welcomed by Italian Foreign Minister Gianni de Michelis later as "very important."

Visiting here in the European Community's 'troika' of Foreign Ministers, he said the declaration issued by the Foreign Ministers of Egypt, Syria and the six Gulf Cooperation Council states includes "rules and principles" which could form the basis for debate with other regional or extra-regional groupings.

The statement said that the 30,000 Egyptian and 20,000 Syrian troops put into the field against Iraq in Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates will form the nucleus for an Arab peace keeping force.

The 'Damascus Declaration' added that the eight signatories see the new force as a "model to provide a full guarantee for an area defense system."

"This is the first time that precise points about rules and principles have been so clearly indicated by Arab states," de Michelis commented. "They can form a precondition for debate and dialogue with other groups of countries inside and outside the region."

'Abd-al-Majid Comments

NC0703095691 Damascus SANA in Arabic 0840 GMT 7 Mar 91

[Excerpts] Damascus, 7 Mar (SANA)—Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid, Egyptian deputy prime minister and foreign minister, and the delegation accompanying him left Damascus this morning, after taking part in the meetings among the foreign ministers of Syria, Egypt, and the Gulf Cooperation Council [GCC], and between them and the European troika delegation which were concluded in Damascus yesterday evening. [passage omitted]

Dr. 'Abd-al-Majid described the meetings as excellent and successful. He asserted that this success was reflected in the Damascus Declaration which summed up the accomplishments of the meetings with brother GCC foreign ministers. He added that the meeting was characterized by its seriousness in defining the objectives in the coming stage, which is very critical and requires consolidated Arab efforts.

Dr. 'Abd-al-Majid said the Damascus meetings were an excellent start, and we, as Arab brothers, must continue the march to serve the Arab nation's interests. [passage omitted]

Delegation Leaves Damascus

NC0703092191 Damascus SANA in Arabic 0820 GMT 7 Mar 91

[Excerpt] Damascus, 7 Mar (SANA)—The European troika delegation, which includes the foreign ministers of Luxembourg, Netherlands, and Italy left Damascus at 0800 today. The delegation was seen off at Damascus international airport by Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar'. [passage omitted]

Palestinian Affairs

PLO Communique Welcomes Bush Statement

NC0703151591 Paris AFP in English 1509 GMT 7 Mar 91

[Text] Nicosia, March 7 (AFP)—The Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) said Thursday it welcomed President George Bush's declaration that the time had come to end the Arab-Israeli conflict.

In a communique released here, the PLO said it responded "favourably" to "the positive elements" in

Mr. Bush's speech to Congress. It called on the United Nations Security Council to "begin the application" of the U.N. resolutions relating to the Arab-Israeli dispute, with all parties, "including the PLO," taking a role.

'Arafat Sends 'Urgent' Messages to AMU Leaders

LD0703103191 Algiers APS in Arabic 0800 GMT 7 Mar 91

[Text] Tunis 7 Mar (APS)—The Palestinian president, Yasir 'Arafat, Wednesday sent "urgent" messages to the AMU [Arab Maghreb Union] leaders on the occasion of the coming AMU summit in Tripoli. In these messages, he stressed the importance of the role of the AMU in "protecting the march of our Arab nation", "healing the wounds" and [words indistinct].

WAFA [PALESTINE NEWS AGENCY] reported that, in his messages to President Chadli Bendjedid, Tunisian President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali, Mauritanian President Maaouiya Ould Sid' Ahmed Taya, Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi, and Moroccan monarch King Hassan II, 'Arafat expressed "his full confidence in the wisdom of the brothers which [words indistinct] and the aggressive war against Iraq which stemmed from it".

The Palestinian president stressed that the current situation in the Arab world, which stemmed from the Gulf crisis and the destructive war against Iraq "urgently calls for doubling efforts to stop more deterioration and divisions in our nation, to heal the wounds and to achieve Arab reconciliation".

He stressed that the PLO has built its position on the Gulf crisis "on the basis of serving the interests of the Arab nation, making it avoid the destruction and repercussions of the foreign military intervention and preserving its dignity, pride, wealth and power. This position stemmed from the commitment of the PLO to our brothers in Iraq and Kuwait". He pointed out that that was what made the PLO [words indistinct] Arab.

'Arafat called for closing the Arab ranks and uniting the Arab views in order to control the effects of the war, stressing that the AMU countries are "the main pillar of our nation who are qualified to carry out this mission".

Discusses Kuwait With UK Envoy

LD0603184191 Algiers Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1702 GMT 6 Mar 91

[Text] The brother leader Abu-'Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat], president of the state of Palestine, yesterday received the British ambassador in Tunis. During the meeting brother Abu-'Ammar received a message of reply from the British government PLO memorandum on the serious situation faced by the Palestinians in Kuwait and the increasing threats to the security and future of this large Palestinian community as a result of the campaigns of mass arrests, kidnapping, assassination, and starvation launched against them.

The British ambassador affirmed that his government pays special attention to this serious issue and is making intensive contacts with the Kuwaiti officials concerned. The meeting was also an opportunity to review the situation of the region during the postwar phase.

Qaddumi on Iraq, Israel, Nationals in Kuwait

NC0603170991 Amman SAWT AL-SHA'B in Arabic 6 Mar 91 pp 1, 13

[By Sa'd al-Silawi]

[Text] Baghdad—Faruq Qaddumi, head of the PLO Political Department, has said that the signs are that the West has completely failed to penetrate the Iraqi situation and create a new reality there.

In a statement to SAWT AL-SHA'B, Qaddumi said that facts in Iraq clearly show it waged an honorable battle and was able to remain steadfast in the face of this fierce Western onslaught that was launched to achieve certain political goals, including the creation of a new reality in Iraq. He said that Iraq remained steadfast, preserved its military power and political situation, and continued to stand firm in the face of the onslaught by Western and other countries to weaken Iraq's steadfastness and divert it from its goal to achieve liberation and enable the entire Arab region to make its own independent political and economic decisions.

Qaddumi arrived in Baghdad the day before yesterday and met with Foreign Minister Tariq 'Aziz. Following the meeting, Qaddumi said: After the end of the military battle, there should be an assessment of the political and popular situation. I clearly referred to the Arab popular awakening, to the end of the Camp David era, and to the need to start a new phase that can reject capitulation and continue Arab struggle and cooperation among pan-Arab movements.

Asked about the outcome of the political war, Qaddumi said that it clearly indicates the strength of the Palestine question and its continuation as a basic issue. Neither peace nor security, he added, can prevail in the region without a solution to the Palestine question.

He also referred to some Western countries' attempts to attack the Palestinian leadership and the PLO and to prevent them from raising the ceiling of their demands. He added that these countries also claim that the PLO and its reputation have been harmed. We clearly say: No one can change the Palestinian leadership except the Palestinian people, and neither the Western countries nor the United States can make any change in the PLO. They have failed to pressure the Palestinian leadership and prevent it from responding to the escalating popular movement to raise its political demands which were achieved by the battle.

Regarding the situation of the Palestinian people in Kuwait, Qaddumi said: The Kuwaiti authorities arrested some Palestinians for questioning. It did not go beyond

that. He added that the PLO is closely watching these measures by the Kuwaiti authorities; we will not allow Palestinians living there to be harmed, he said.

He said that the PLO is eager to unify Arab ranks and solve all issues without foreign interference. He asserted that the PLO's warnings that there would be an aggression against Iraq had been proved right.

The West, he said, made strenuous efforts to mobilize all these military forces to attack Iraq, and when it felt it would not be able to achieve its political goals, it withdrew. Despite all losses and casualties, he added, Iraq was able to remain steadfast in this battle. The big loser is anyone who stood in the opposite trench, because of internal crises and because of the fact that Arab people everywhere refused to do anything against their brothers in Iraq.

He pointed out that the demonstrations in many countries condemned those who participated in the aggression against Iraq or provided an Arab cover for that aggression. They are the losers, and we have emerged believing in the Arab nation's cause and unity, as well as in the unity of a militant political line rather than cooperation with the West or other foreigners, which are trying to commit aggression against the Arab nation and continue to plunder its wealth. If there had been an Arab solution, Arab solidarity, and Arab tolerance, these problems would have been solved, and these billions of dollars would not have been wasted. But, as a result of intransigence, he added, many victims fell, billions of dollars were wasted, and, regrettably, many oil countries were impoverished.

Regarding a meeting of countries advocating an Arab solution, Qaddumi said that when it made its Arab contacts, the PLO stressed the need to hold such a meeting to assess the battle and its outcome, and to draw up a future concept of overall Arab relations.

Regarding the PLO's practical measures to protect Palestinians in Kuwait, Qaddumi said that the PLO sent memorandums to the United Nations and other parties concerned to draw their attention to the possibility that Palestinians in Kuwait would be subjected to repression and arbitrary measures. I hope, he added, that nothing of this sort will take place. He said that the PLO warned all the parties concerned, in writing, against any repressive actions that might harm the Palestinian people.

Regarding the need to protect Palestinians in Kuwait, he said: This time the PLO warns seriously and responsibly because we want balanced Arab relations without encroaching on the Palestinians' interests.

The Palestinian official declared that the Arab nation will not allow Israel to exist, survive, or go on, as long as hostile intentions and the occupation of Palestinian and Arab lands continue. He added that any solution to the Middle East crisis should take place within the framework of the solution proposed by the United Nations and approved by most nations in the world. That solution, he added, was based on the Palestinian peace initiative which was supported by most people. Israel's presence in the occupied Palestinian and Arab territories, he said, will not provide it with peace, security, or even survival.

He said that Israel's tense situation and failure to respond over the past 40 years have affected its psychology and its generations, and made it understand that Palestine is the basic issue. Therefore, he added, the Arab nation will never allow Israel to continue to exist.

Egypt

Mubarak 'Concerned' About Iraqi Interests

NC0603210591 Cairo Domestic Service in Arabic 1230 GMT 6 Mar 91

[Text] Information Minister Safwat al-Sharif has asserted that President Husni Mubarak was and still is concerned about the Iraqi peoples' interests, and that this well-known position was heard clearly by the whole world. He also said that the Iraqi people are a fraternal Arab people who are not guilty of the pains, tragedies, and displacements inflicted on them.

In a statement to MENA, Safwat al-Sharif added: The Kuwaiti people, whose land was liberated following a treacherous, temporary occupation which they did not expect from a neighboring Arab country, will recover now that the sun of freedom has risen over them, and will make a sudden and swift departure from their temporary ordeal and take their natural position within their Arab nation and the broader human world.

The information minister added that after Iraq's occupation of Kuwait, the Arab peoples have found out that something has to be changed in order to return tranquillity and stability to the Arab homeland and its peoples after the Iraqi regime violated international norms and tried to impose the phenomenon of negative friction with its neighbors, which resulted in a spirit of hostility and division.

The information minister said: The whole world—with its people, governments, agencies, and institutions represented by the Security Council and the United Nations—directed the Gulf crisis politically and militarily in defense of legitimacy, right, and principles, and in implementation of the world organization's resolutions.

Prime Minister Notes Economic Reform Measures

NC0603164291 Cairo Domestic Service in Arabic 1500 GMT 6 Mar 91

[Excerpts] Prime Minister Dr. 'Atif Sidqi has said that a number of positive steps have been approved to liberate the Egyptian economy in 1,000 days, among these being the liberation of interest and exchange rates. His excellency said that the free exchange market allows for the free play of the forces of supply and demand and that the government is monitoring these forces. The government, he said, seeks to establish realistic values for foreign currencies and, consequently, for the Egyptian pound.

The prime minister made these remarks at the inauguration of a project to improve potable water and sewage in western al-'Umraniyah in al-Jizah Governorate. The project costs 50 million pounds and is financed by the Japanese Assistance Agency. [passage omitted]

The prime minister said that the law of executive posts [qanun al-qiyadat] for government and the public sector has been approved. The law aims at reforming the wage scales and the economy and will introduce incentives in leading government posts so as to help increase national income.

Dr. 'Atif Sidqi said that the efforts are being made to implement the new government employees law during the current session of the People's Assembly. The goal of that law is to improve the level of performance, to increase production, and to enhance working conditions. [passage omitted]

Defense Official Says 10 Killed in Gulf War

NC0603035691 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2350 GMT 5 Mar 91

[Excerpts] Suhaj, 5 Mar (MENA)—This evening, the body of combatant Amjad Safwat 'Ajib, who was martyred in the war for the liberation of Kuwait to vindicate right and justice, was laid to rest in the village of al-Samata, which is affiliated with the city of al-Balyana in the Governorate of Suhaj.

The funeral ceremony, which began at the al-Balyana city council, was attended by Brigadier General Faruq 'Abd-al-Rahman al-Sharqawi, representative of the president; Colonel Ra'fat Muhammad Mahran, representative of the defense minister; and Jamal al-Qabbani, assistant secretary general of the governorate who stood in for Suhaj Governor Major General Mamduh Bur'i. [passage omitted]

Today, Staff Major General Hitler Tantawi, assistant secretary general of the Ministry of Defense, read out a statement at the funeral of the Egyptian martyr who died in the war for the liberation of Kuwait, saying that the will of Almighty God desires that our 10 martyrs who sacrificed their lives in this battle serve as an expression of our Egyptian national unity, and as an embodiment of the slogan "Egypt comes first."

Staff Maj. Gen. Tantawi added: As for the other nine Muslim martyrs, they will be buried in the holy lands, because this was the request they expressed before the outbreak of the battle. Combatant Amjad was buried in Egypt at the desire of his family.

Concluding his statement, the assistant secretary general of the Ministry of Defense said: Thanks to God and His blessings, our casualties were very few. However, our martyrs who sacrificed their lives will always have their names recorded in the honor rolls of this age-old nation.

Damascus Meeting Called Beginning of New Stage

NC0603071891 Cairo Domestic Service in Arabic 0435 GMT 6 Mar 91

[From the press review]

[Text] Headlines in today's Cairo papers focus on yesterday's meeting between the foreign ministers of Egypt, Syria, and the six countries of the Gulf Cooperation

Council in Damascus. AL-AKHBAR says that the foreign ministers of these countries discussed the developments of the Arab situation after Kuwait's liberation and the security arrangements required by international legitimacy.

It is expected that the ministers will end their meetings this afternoon by issuing the texts of agreements on coordination and cooperation.

An AL-JUMHURIYAH editorial says that the meeting between the foreign ministers of Egypt, Syria, and the Gulf cooperation countries in Damascus represents the first positive Arab step following the cease-fire in the Gulf. This was preceded by a preparatory meeting in Cairo and another meeting in Riyadh with Saudi Arabia's King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, in which the unity of view for the next stage was made firm. The Qatari foreign minister said a declaration of coordination and cooperation between the eight countries will be approved within the framework of comprehensive cooperation in the field of Arab security to confront the challenges surrounding it, until the serious and strong spirit of Arab solidarity is regained and activity within the basic institutions, the Arab League, is revitalized, since it is the umbrella within which dialogue takes place and from which agreements stem.

AL-JUMHURIYAH concludes: The Arab world has now placed its feet at the beginning of a new stage that looks to the future and does not cry over spilled milk.

Libya

Reportage on Damascus Foreign Ministers' Meeting

Final Declaration Criticized

LD0603141691 Tripoli Domestic Service in Arabic 1230 GMT 6 Mar 91

[Text] In Damascus, the signing took place of a document called the Damascus Declaration for coordination and cooperation in the political, security, and economic fields among the GCC [Gulf Cooperation Council] member countries and Egypt and Syria, following a meeting of the foreign ministers of these countries. The document provides for the creation of a military force consisting mainly of Egyptian and Syrian forces for safeguarding security in the Gulf region.

Commenting on the signing of the declaration, the JANA Arab affairs editor writes: The result achieved by the aforementioned meeting is tantamount, in fact, to a consecration of division and a return to the policy of axes which the Arab nation could do without, and which could lead to the creation of two Arab Leagues.

The JANA Arab affairs editor warned that the future of the region cannot be decided by a [select] group of countries, and that pan-Arab responsibility demands cessation of the futile policy of axes and return to the Arab League and raising it to the Arab federation plan put forward to the Arab nation—from the Gulf to the ocean—for several years. This is because there can be no future for this nation except with unity and the integration of its resources.

'Axis' May Split Arab League

LD0603095791 Tripoli JANA in English 0810 GMT 6 Mar 91

[Text] [name indistinct] al-Rabi'e [March] 6, JAMAHIRIYAH NEWS AGENCY—The first session of the meeting between the foreign ministers of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) of the Arab Gulf states with the two foreign ministers of Egypt and Syria were concluded yesterday afternoon.

Syria's Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' announced after the meeting that the talks were "constructive" and discussed coordination and cooperation amongst those states with regards to the future situation in the region from the security, political and economic aspects.

The meeting of the GCC foreign ministers and the foreign ministers of Egypt and Syria which had been repeated until it almost became a distinctive line of Arab policy despite the fact that it did not yield any positive results contrary to what the Arab politics had made us accustomed to. [sentence as received] The negative result of this meeting is strengthening the unnecessary split of the Arab nation and the creation of two Arab leagues.

Apart from this meeting being an axis of separation and (?splitting) of the Arab League, its declaration that it is gathering together the states which were opposing Iraq's occupation of Kuwait, which is a basis that is completely blown up, because the other Arab states which are not included in this separation axis were also not in support of Iraq's occupation of Kuwait, only if we excluded maybe Jordan and the Palestine Liberation Organization.

And the future of the region can not be decided by those states alone and the national responsibility necessitates refraining from the politics of axis which is unproductive and to return to the Arab League and elevate it to the project of Arab union.

Negative Perception of Meeting Cited

LD0203210991 Tripoli Libyan Television Network in Arabic 1930 GMT 2 Mar 91

[Text] The foreign ministers of the GCC [Gulf Cooperation Council], Syria, and Egypt will meet in Damascus on 5 March. The meeting, it was announced, will discuss the achievement of peace and stability in the region and improving relations between those countries, in addition to examining the situation in the Arabian Gulf after the cessation of military operations.

AFP quoted sources in Cairo as having said that the foreign ministers of these countries will endorse a document defining the mechanism of their cooperation in the postwar era, particularly in the fields of security and economics.

Egyptian Foreign Minister Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid told journalists today that this meeting holds great significance, being the first after the liberation of Kuwait and of all of the participating countries who supported the UN resolutions and denounced the invasion of Kuwait.

JANA's Arab affairs editor commented on this, saying: The meeting of the foreign ministers of the GCC countries, Syria, and Egypt, which has been held regularly and became a distinct feature of Arab politics, has produced no positive results, customary of Arab politics; yet it will be of negative outcome, namely the entrenchement of the unnecessary division of the Arab nation and the creation of two Arab leagues.

The editor said what has prompted us to comment on this meeting, in addition to being the axis of division and split of the Arab League, is the announcement that it comprises the states which were opposing the Iraqi occupation of Kuwait. This is a totally undermined rule, as the Arab countries outside this seperatist axis did not support the Iraqi occupation of Kuwait, with the exception, perhaps, of Jordan and the PLO.

The editor stressed that the region's future cannot be decided by these countries alone and that the pan-Arab responsibility dictates the abandonment of the futile axis policy and the return to the Arab League to promote it to the level of an Arab federation project.

Al-Qadhdhafi Consults International Leaders

Receives Moroccan Crown Prince

LD0603202591 Tripoli JANA in English 1818 GMT 6 Mar 91

[Text] Tripoli, Al-Rabah [March] 6, JAMAHIRIYAH NEWS AGENCY—The leader of the revolution received today Crown Prince Muhammad of sisterly Morocco who handed him a written letter from King Hassan II of Morocco.

The meeting was attended by Col. Mustafa al-Kharubbi, [word indistinct] Alawi the minister of state in Morocco and Morocco's ambassador to great Jamahiriyah.

Receives Kim Il-Song Message

LD0603161991 Tripoli Domestic Service in Arabic 1230 GMT 6 Mar 91

[Text] The brother leader of the revolution received Kim Yong-nam, deputy chairman of the Executive Council and foreign minister of North Korea, who conveyed to him a message from President Kim Il-song concerning development of positive relations between the Great Jamahiriyah and North Korea.

The foreign minister also briefed the brother leader of the revolution on the Korean president's efforts to achieve unity between the two halves of Korea.

Meets Ghana Representative

LD0603173191 Tripoli Domestic Service in Arabic 1230 GMT 6 Mar 91

[Text] The brother leader of the revolution has received Captain Kojo Tsikata, member of the Defense Council and official in charge of internal and external affairs at the National Defense Council in Ghana. Captain Tsikata conveyed to the brother leader a message from Flight Lieutenant Jerry Rawlings, chairman of the Ghana National Defense Council, concerning the latest developments in the African continent, the latest development of the situation in Liberia, and bilateral relations between the two friendly countries.

Moves To Repair Al-Rabitah Complex Reported

LD0603202591 Tripoli JANA in Arabic 1830 GMT 6 Mar 91

[Text] Tripoli, 6 March (JANA)—A responsible source at the People's Bureau for External Liaison and International Cooperation has stated that the Great Jamahiriya is now holding earnest negotiations with some European states to repair and operate the al-Rabitah industrial complex to produce medicine to supply the needs of the Arab homeland and other areas of the world. The source added that the negotiations cover partnership in the factory, administration, and management by experts from West Europe and by Libyan Arabs.

This is in reply to a report carried in THE WASHINGTON TIMES and quoted by the Italian papers LA REPUBBLICA and EL TEMPO.

Sudan

RCC Welcomes Restoration of Kuwaiti Legitimacy

AB0603172891 Dakar PANA in English 1552 GMT 6 Mar 91

[Text] Khartoum, 6 March (PANA)—Sudan declared Tuesday its satisfaction with the restoration of the legitimacy of Kuwait after the end of the Gulf War between the international coalition forces and Iraq. A member of the Sudan Revolution Command Council [RCC], Colonel Martin Malwal Arop, welcomed the announcement of the restoration of the legitimacy of Kuwait during discussion in Khartoum with the Kuwaiti ambassador to Sudan, 'Abdullah al-Sirayya.

Arop thanked Kuwait for its aid and support to Sudan, especially towards the drought and civil war striken Southern provinces. His statement showed a change in the stance of Sudan which was considered to be a sympathiser of Iraq since its invasion of Kuwait on 2 August 1990. It also demonstrated Sudan's desire to improve its relations with Kuwait. The liberation of

Kuwait and the restoration of the Emirate's legitimate government was also hailed by another member of the ruling council, Brigadier 'Uthman Ahmad Hasan.

University Students Criticize 'Military Regime'

EA0703103991 (Clandestine) Radio of the Sudanese People's Liberation Army in Arabic 1330 GMT 6 Mar 91

[Text] The security authorities of the Islamic Front military regime arrested two members of the Khartoum University Students' Union on the university campus last Thursday, 28 February, during the 1988-1989 classes' graduation ceremony, in which the deputy leader of the military junta, Major General al-Zubayr Muhammad Salih, participated. The head of the university did not allow the student union's leader to make his customary speech congratulating the graduates, which has been done since Khartoum University was established.

Reacting to that obstinate refusal, the students distributed a strongly worded statement criticizing the front's government. Students of the Democratic Front, the Democratic Union, the 'Ummah Party, and independents signed the statement. The statement described Brigadier [title as heard] 'Umar al-Bashir, leader of the junta, as an imbecile and held him responsibile for the destruction that has struck Sudan and its people in all political, economic, social, and diplomatic fields. The statement also criticized the credibility of the Islamic Front's military regime in announcing its federalism policy and then appointing governors of regions and their deputies last month, declaring that the country would continue following central policies.

How can granting federal powers to regions be interpreted at a time when the Islamic Front's authority in Khartoum is appointing regional governors and their deputies? The statement also criticized the arrest campaigns launched by the junta last month against politicians, trade unionists, and students. It also criticized the authority's seizure of the civil service, its liquidation, and its replacement by pro-front elements.

This pamphlet was distributed during the ceremony and before the eyes of Maj. Gen. al-Zubayr. The students also chanted slogans hostile to the Islamic Front's regime, affirming that the hour of salvation for exterminating the front's regime is very close.

Military Source Claims Rebel Camps Destroyed

EA0603170691 Khartoum National Unity Radio in Arabic 1450 GMT 5 Mar 91

[Unscheduled announcement]

[Text] A military source at General Headquarters has announced that the armed forces are continuing their courageous operation against rebel remnants in the various sectors of the operational zones. The source revealed that the forces in Equatoria succeeded on 1 March in vanquishing the outlaws and destroying their camps in the (Fajarah) and (Yartank) areas, inflicting considerable losses in life and materiel and capturing a number of small arms and quantities of ammunition.

The source went on to state that a force from the Damazin command had succeeded in destroying the (Lika) and (Wanabdi) camps, inflicting losses in life and materiel on the outlaws.

In southern Kurdufan, the source stated that the Camel Rider [hajjanah] forces had succeeded in destroying outlaw camps in (Katila), Safaya, and Jabal Tuleshi, where they inflicted considerable losses on the enemy while not suffering any losses themselves.

Elsewhere, the source stated that a joint force of the Armed Forces and the Popular Defense Forces on 3 March succeeded in destroying an outlaw camp at (Mirshawow). The source said that the armed forces found eight charred corpses of citizens near the village of (?Majdah) [word indistinct] the Jabal Nubah. Eyewitnesses stated that three outlaws killed those citizens and burned them on 1 March. The source commented on this atrocity, saying that it indicated the extent of the rebel movement's [words indistinct] following the failure of their leadership politically and militarily, and testified to the hatred of the outlaws toward local and tribal elements [words indistinct] where the outlaws are committing acts of looting and kidnapping, which has prompted the tribes to clearly regard the rebel movement as the enemy and attack it, inflicting losses of life and material.

Kuwait

Foreign Minister: 'Arafat Contacts 'Impossible'

NC0703084591 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0715 GMT 7 Mar 91

[Text] Damascus, 7 Mar (MENA)—Shaykh Sabah al-Ahmad al-Jabir al-Sabah, Kuwaiti deputy prime minister and foreign minister, has stressed that his Government will continue to open its heart to every honorable Palestinian and Arab. But there is no place in Kuwait for anyone violating the law, irrespective of his nationality, Shaykh al-Sabah said.

Commenting on his meeting last night with a number of Palestinian leaders, Shaykh al-Sabah said he explained during the meeting the truth of reports about problems facing Palestinians in Kuwait. The reports, he explained, were exaggerated because they suggested that the Palestinians were being killed in the streets.

He said he explained during the meeting Kuwait's continued adoption of the Palestinian cause. Shaykh al-Sabah pointed out that Yasir 'Arafat and his group are trying to open new contacts with Kuwait. But he expressed belief that this is now impossible because confidence was lost after 'Arafat had shown ingratitude and forgot that Fatah and the Palestinian struggle were born in and staged from Kuwait.

Shaykh al-Sabah last night received in Damascus former Palestine National Council Speaker Khalid al-Fahum and former Palestinian officials 'Abd-al-Muhsin Abu-Mayzar, 'Isam al-Qadi, and Talal Naji.

Al-Fahum said that he and his companions asked Shaykh al-Sabah that 'Arafat's bias toward Saddam Husayn not be reflected on Palestinians residing in Kuwait and Saudi Arabia. He said struggling Palestinians appreciate Kuwait's hospitality and generosity.

State 'May' Cut Jordan, Sudan, Yemen, PLO Ties

PM0603101091 London AL-ZAHIRAH in Arabic 4 Mar 91 p 2

[Unattributed report: "Kuwait May Decide To Sever Relations With Jordan, Sudan, Yemen, And PLO"]

[Text] al-Ta'if, AL-ZAHIRAH—It has been learned from reliable sources that the Kuwaiti Government has a complete view of what Kuwait's foreign relations will like be after its return to Kuwait. AL-ZAHIRAH has acquired information about this view. It is based on several principles, including strengthening Saudi-Kuwaiti ties at the highest level, especially in view of the unique solidarity between the two leaderships and the Kuwaiti and Saudi peoples in this crisis. Our reporter in Kuwait says that Saudi reporters and soldiers sense the warm feelings toward the Saudi role wherever they go. Kuwait will also try to tangibly strengthen its Gulf relations.

It will do the same at the Arab level, including its position toward Egypt, Syria, Lebanon, and Morocco. As for the position toward the states belonging to the suspect alliance with Saddam, the Kuwaiti Government is expected to sever its diplomatic ties with Jordan, Yemen, and Sudan. It will also close the PLO office and deal with other Palestinian parties in order to maintain its link with the Palestinian people. These stances have not been confirmed, but the information available says that matters are moving in that direction.

Amir Receives ICO Secretary, Turkish Envoy

LD0503135291 London KUNA in Arabic 1330 GMT 5 Mar 91

[Formerly Kuwait KUNA]

[Excerpts] al-Ta'if, 5 Mar (KUNA)—His Excellency Amir Shaykh Jabir al-Ahmad al-Sabah received this afternoon His Excellency Dr. Hamid al-Ghabid, secretary general of the Islamic Conference Organization [ICO], who conveyed to His Highness his congratulations and those of the ICO Permanent Secretariat on the liberation of Kuwait from the sinful Iraqi aggression. [passage omitted]

His Highness also met with the Turkish ambassador to Kuwait who conveyed to his highness a message from Turkish President Turgut Ozal concerning developments in the Gulf region following the defeat of the Iraqi regime and its aggression against the peaceful State of Kuwait. [passage omitted]

Amir Receives Canadian Foreign Minister

LD0603134391 London KUNA in Arabic 1255 GMT 6 Mar 91

[Formerly Kuwait KUNA]

[Text] al-Ta'if, 6 Mar (KUNA)—His Highness Shaykh Jabir al-Ahmad al-Sabah, the amir of the State of Kuwait, this afternoon received His Excellency Mr. Clark, the foreign minister of Canada, and his accompanying delegation. He delivered to his highness messages from his excellency the governor general of Canada and from the prime minister congratulating him on the liberation of the State of Kuwait from the treacherous Iraqi occupation. The minister also discussed with his highness bilateral relations between the two friendly countries and the latest developments on the Gulf scene.

The meeting was attended by 'Abd al-Rahman Salim al-'Atiqi, adviser at his highness' office; and Finance Minister Shaykh 'Ali Khalifa al-'Athbi.

Prime Minister Receives John Major

LD0603144391 London KUNA in Arabic 1355 GMT 6 Mar 91

[Formerly Kuwait KUNA]

[Excerpt] Kuwait, 6 Mar (KUNA)—Shaykh Sa'd al-'Abdallah al-Salim al-Sabah, his highness the heir

apparent and prime minister, revealed here this morning that His Highness Shaykh Jabir al-Ahmad al-Sabah, the amir of Kuwait, will return to the country in the near future.

Shaykh Sa'd said during his meeting with British Prime Minister John Major that the amir will return to the country in a short time. He refused, however, to reveal whether that will take place in the next few days.

Shaykh Sa'd al'Abdallah al-Salim al-Sabah, who has turned a local Kuwaiti family's home in al-Shamiyah district into his headquarters, expressed his deep thanks to the British forces which participated in the liberation of Kuwait and in expelling the Iraqi forces from it.

He said that Kuwait and Britain will maintain their strong mutual relations based on mutual understanding and consultations on the various regional and international issues.

British Prime Minister John Major, who arrived at the meeting place by helicopter, said he did not expect to visit Kuwait on such a day and that the speedy development of the military operations "was an overwhelming victory for the coalition forces."

Mr. Major, who afterwards met with Shaykh Sa'd al-'Abdallah for an hour, said that he will discuss issues relating to the rebuilding of Kuwait and that he will not discuss matters relating to internal policy. [passsage omitted]

'New' Resistance Group Rejects Martial Law

NC0603160391 Paris AFP in English 1542 GMT 6 Mar 91

[Text] Abu Dhabi, March 6 (AFP)—A new Kuwaiti resistance group has rejected the imposition of martial law in Kuwait, saying the measure was "unconstitutional," a report published here Wednesday said.

Cited by the United Arab Emirates daily AL-KHALIJ, the Democratic Forum movement issued a communique saying: "The martial law decree should have first been approved by parliament in accordance with the Constitution of 1962."

The forum voiced hoped that imposition of martial law "does not deviate from its main goal, which is to maintain the country's security and stability and hopes it does not serve as a pretext for delaying application of the Constitution."

Kuwait's ruler, Shaykh Jabir al-Ahmad al-Sabah, proclaimed a three-month martial law in the country late last month and charged the prime minister, Shaykh Sa'd al-'Abdallah, with administering it.

Shaykh Sa'd returned Monday to Kuwait after nearly seven months in exile following Iraq's invasion of the emirate and the ensuing U.S.-led war to dislodge Baghdad's forces from the emirate.

Democratic Forum, which claims to group "all the national and democratic forces of free Kuwait," advocates the reinstatement of parliamentary life, in keeping with the Constitution, and the organization of legislative elections after the country returns to normal.

The statement said current circumstances "require the formation of a new government, representing Kuwaitis, to facilitate national reconstruction and democratic progress" in the emirate.

Since parliament was dissolved in 1986, the Kuwaiti opposition—grouping some 30 former MPs—has argued that the Constitution was violated twice in recent years.

On the first occasion, Shaykh Jabir did not call for elections during the two months following the dissolution of parliament, opposition leaders said.

The opposition said the Constitution was swept aside a second time last June when the emir forced the election of a National Council, whose powers paled in comparison with the former legislative body's.

Shaykh Jabir had decreed that 50 members would be elected and 25 others appointed by him.

Editorial Calls For Overthrowing Saddam

PM0403164191 Cairo AL-ANBA' in Arabic 1 Mar 91 p 1

[Editorial: "Toppling the Tyrant"—formerly Kuwait AL-ANBA']

[Text] When Nazi Germany was defeated by the allied forces in World War II, Adolf Hitler committed suicide. With the defeat of the fascists in Italy, the Italian people hanged Mussolini and then suspended him from his feet as a lesson for every tyrant.

The pressing question now is: When will the murderer of Baghdad face his inevitable fate?

Toppling Saddam Husayn and his regime must remain an urgent international demand for the sake of world peace and stability. In fact, his trial and that of his oppressive clique must be realized as soon as possible so that the war criminals can be punished decisively.

If the Iraqi dictator were merely to remain in power—although that power has collapsed—it would mean that peace in the region would remain threatened. This is in addition to the fact that he represents a symbol of crime and a hotbed of aggression that must be eradicated.

To rely on the Iraqi people to topple their oppressive ruler may make us wait longer, especially because a sizable section of that aggressive people has taken part in the invasion crime and participated in the criminal and inhuman practices. Furthermore, a people that accepts that dictator's remaining as their ruler after he has

inflicted devastation and ruin on them can only be described as weak, unconscious, blind, and unseeing. Besides, toppling the tyrant of Baghdad is not an internal Iraqi affair, because Saddam's crimes have not been confined to Iraq but have reached out to include its neighbors, the Arab nation as a whole, and indeed the entire world.

Despite the crushing defeat inflicted on the Iraqi Army and its Republican Guard which combines both annihilation and imprisonment, the mad dictator continues to address his unconscious people with the exposed series of lies claiming that he has defeated the world, triumphed over the allies, and imposed the cease-fire on them!!

That lying, deceiving, and criminal ruler does not deserve to live. Although Kuwait has been liberated, thank God, and although all the Security Council resolutions have been imposed forcibly on collapsed Iraq, toppling Saddam and his regime remains an important and fundamental aim awaiting immediate realization. Just as our faith in God was great regarding the liberation of Kuwait—and it has now been liberated with God's help and the support of the brothers and friends—we are very confident that the divine justice will inevitably punish the murderer of Iraq just as it has punished all criminals, tyrants, and oppressors.

Oman

Minister Foresees 'Long Period' of Gulf Stability

PM0603141591 Muscat OMAN DAILY OBSERVER in English 3 Mar 91 pp 1, 2

[Unattributed report on interview with Yusuf Bin-al-'Alawi Bin-'Abdallah, Omani minister of state for foreign affairs; place, date not given]

[Text] Muscat—The war to liberate Kuwait has put the region on the threshold of a long period of stability, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Yusuf Bin-al-'Alawi Bin-'Abdallah has said.

Mr. 'Abdallah said the war was executed with a high level of efficiency because of U.S. President George Bush's ability and competence.

"This resulted in a quick end to the war," he pointed out in an interview with 'UMAN, the sister daily of the OBSERVER in Arabic and the Oman News Agency.

One must not only consider the military results of the war, but look at the political consequences as well, he added.

Mr. 'Abdallah said the political effect would be manifested in the long period of peace and stability which the region was going to experience.

It was important, he said, that one drew a balance between military and political results.

He reiterated that the Gulf countries must now make use of these results in the best possible manner for achieving long-term stablity for themselves.

Mr. 'Abdallah observed that material damages incurred by Kuwait and Iraq could be repaired in course of time, but the most significant aspect was the political system that would prevail from now.

"The coming period will provide us with an historic oportunity to put things in the right perspective," the Minister said.

The Sultanate, he added, would exert all possible effort with the experience it had acquired during the past 20 years to ensure that the Gulf countries and rest of the Arab states were in a position to lead the new Arab era.

He said: "We must have the position of leadership in this field because we are the countries which are more capable of exploring the realms of the future than others.

"We, as we are undergoing the results of the war, believe that the future of Arab countries should be based on the convictions of the states that have felt these efforts from all sides."

He underlined that the Gulf states could not compromise on matters related to their future and the future of all Arabs.

Mr. 'Abdallah noted that the whole world was not sympathetic towards the Arab world—a chance we should make full use of.

"There are enough reasons to reformulate the future of Arab co-operation," he remarked.

The Minister said it was possible that the Arab nation would not hesitate to co-operate with the new world order and the countries leading this order so that a new Arab framework was created to adopt to it.

Arab countries did not have the resources to wage unsuccessful wars in future. "The Gulf War should be the last."

We must now fight a different kind of war, one against ignorance and poverty and for development and inter-Arab collaboration so that Arabs would be a positive and fruitful element in the world community.

But this did not mean that one should under-state Arab problems and issues, Mr. 'Abdallah said. We must be the generation that shoulders the responsibility for solving them, particularly with regard to the Palestinian issue, he added.

He noted the Palestinian problem was the main issue facing the Arab world. The Palestinian people themselves should be the basis for solving this problem.

Responsible Arab countries would help them to solve it, Mr. 'Abdallah stressed.

The ambitions and destiny of Palestinians should be balanced in a realistic manner with those of other Arabs.

However, the Arab countries must be realistic and not try to achieve the impossible. Past experience had shown that our behaviour in this regard had exceeded the limits, he pointed out.

"We believe that if we have to advise the Palestinians, it should be: Let our aspirations and actions be within the limits of the possible."

"We believe that chances are plenty now and the Bush administration is the best that is capable of understanding Arab feelings towards the Palestinian issue.

"It is also capable of extending maximum possible assistance towards the solution of the problem.

"We should not miss this chance as we did the earlier ones."

It should be understood, he underlined, that the Gulf countries would not allow a repetition of tragedies that had befallen the Arabs.

"Rest [as published] of the Arab community should understand that we are not an island by ourselves, but are part of the world."

He reaffirmed that the Sultanate would use all its experience and contacts to serve the interests of the Arab citizen, especially the Gulf national. It would be worthwhile, he said, for Arabs to enter the post-war period with a new morale, with those who erred admitting their errors.

He said he believed that the Arab leaders, supported by their peoples, were capable of overcoming misfortunes of the past and learn the proper value of responsibility in the light of this war.

"These tragedies have made it imperative for some Arab leaders to put their people on the right path.

"We must say 'let by-gones be by-gones', but we must not, in the meantime, repeat past mistakes. We must say this keeping in mind that the interests of Arabs are strongly linked together."

Mr. 'Abdallah expressed is conviction that the conditions laid down by the American President for the post-war period formed the basis for a new stable world order.

He added these conditions take into account the interests of both the victor and the vanquished, but left no chance for a return to the past.

He said the Bush administration would work towards the drawing up of a balanced world order whose major goal was co-operation for the sake of development.

"The time of domination has passed. It is the time for integration and agreement."

Answering a question about His Majesty Sultan Qabus being the chairman of a committee assigned the task of post-war arrangements, Mr. 'Abdallah said the Sultanate would draw on its past experiences in this regard.

He revealed that further details would be discussed at a meeting of Foreign Ministers of the GCC [Gulf Cooperation Council] today in Riyadh.

"We are hopeful of putting forward a comprehensive plan for a meeting later in Damascus," he added.

The Damascus meeting, he said, would be attended by the eight countries that had met in Cairo recently and drawn up specific ideas for the benefit of the future of the entire Arab world.

The rest of the Arab states could join in later.

Mr. 'Abdallah said the main objective of the eight countries, the GCC and Egypt and Syria, was to work within the framework of the Arab League which, he added, should be the vital basis for all Arab efforts.

The efforts of the eight nations would be within the charter of the Arab League which called for Arab states to have a bilateral or collective platform aiming at stronger co-operation.

"The other Arab countries have the option of being a part of a stronger framework," the Minister said.

He referred to disagreements at the Cairo meeting and said:

"It gave us an opportunity to decide not to work within a defective framework that does not give room for collective action.

"So, whoever wants to join in this workforce are welcome to do so within the limits of straight forward comitment."

Mr. 'Abdallah said that bitter lessons learned from the Gulf War and Iraq's occupation of Kuwait had emphasised the principle of rationality as opposed to sentimentalism.

"We will keep up with this principle which gives priority to rationality and prudence," he said, adding:

"We, in the Sultanate, are glad to see that while we are taking this path, there are also other important countries which are part of the new eight-nation gathering and following the same policy."

Qatar

Egypt's Mubarak Calls Amir, Reviews Developments

NC0503211191 Manama WAKH in Arabic 1945 GMT 5 Mar 91

[Text] Doha, 5 Mar (WAKH)—Egyptian President Husni Mubarak tonight telephoned the amir of Qatar His Highness Shaykh Khalifah Bin-Hamad Al Thani.

The QATARI NEWS AGENCY reported that the two leaders exchanged views and consultations on the latest developments in the Arab and international arenas and also reviewed bilateral relations and the means of strengthening and developing them.

Canadian Defense Minister Arrives for Visit

On Regional Tour

NC0503214391 Manama WAKH in Arabic 2050 GMT 5 Mar 91

[Text] Doha, 5 Mar (WAKH)—Canadian National Defense Minister William McKnight arrived in Doha tonight for a two-day visit to Qatar which is part of a tour he will make of the region's countries.

He was received on arrival by Shaykh 'Abdallah Bin-Khalifah Al Thani, interior minister and acting minister of finance and oil, and Staff Colonel Shaykh Hamad Bin-'Abdallah Al Thani, chief of staff of the Qatari Armed Forces.

Meets Heir Apparent

NC0703022291 Manama WAKH in English 1525 GMT 6 Mar 91

[Text] Doha, March 06 (GNA)—The Qatari heir apparent and defence minister Shaykh Hamad Bin-Khalifah Al Thani met here today with the Canadian National Defence Minister William Mcknight.

The meeting was attended by the interior minister Shaykh 'Abdallah Bin-Khalifah Al Thani, chief of staff of the Armed Forces group captain Shaykh Hamad Bin-'Abdallah, the director of the office of the Heir Apparent and Defence Minister Shaykh Muhammad Bin-Khalid Al Thani and members of the delegation accompanying the Canadian minister.

They made a general review of important developments in the region in light of the end of the war in the Gulf and discussed a number of issues dealing with cooperation between the two friendly states specially in military fields.

Saudi Arabia

Red Cross Returns Saudi, Kuwaiti POW's

LD0703091991 Riyadh Domestic Service in Arabic 0400 GMT 7 Mar 91

[Excerpts] Thirty-five coalition forces POW's, including nine Saudis and one Kuwaiti, arrived in Riyadh yesterday on board an International Red Cross aircraft in implementation of the agreement in Safwan in southern Iraq last Sunday.

They were received at Riyadh air base by His Royal Highness Staff Lt. Gen. Khalid Bin-Sultan Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, commander of the Joint Forces and theater of Operations; and General Norman Schwarzkopf, commander of the U.S. forces in the Arabian Gulf region . [passage omitted]

On this occasion, Staff Lt. Gen. Khalid Bin-Sultan Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz congratulated King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz Al Sa'ud, custodian of the two holy mosques, for the arrival home of the Saudi POW's. [passage omitted]

His royal highness said: For the first time in the history of Saudi Arabia, there are POW's in a war launched by the aggressor against us.

His royal highness announced that 12 Saudis, who were in Iraq during the war to liberate Kuwait, will return very soon, God willing. His royal highness said: They are not considered POW's because they did not participate in the war to liberate Kuwait, but they happened to be in Iraq during that time. [passage omitted]

King Fahd Receives UK Prime Minister Major

LD0603204791 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 1749 GMT 6 Mar 91

[Text] Riyadh, 6 Mar (SPA)—King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz Al Sa'ud, custodian of the two holy mosques, this evening received British Prime Minister John Major and the delegation accompanying him at his office in the Yamamah Palace.

The meeting was attended by His Royal Highness Prince Bandar Bin-Sultan-Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, the Saudi ambassador to Washington; His Excellency Ibrahim al-'Anqari, adviser to the custodian of the two holy mosques; His Excellency Hisham Nazir, minister of oil and mineral resources and acting planning minister; and Jordan Munroe, British ambassador to Saudi Arabia.

Prince Sultan Receives Malaysian Delegation

LD0603144691 Riyadh SPA in English 1234 GMT 6 Mar 91

[Text] Riyadh, March 6, SPA—Prince Sultan Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, the second deputy premier, minister of defense, aviation and inspector general received here last

night a Malaysian friendship delegation led by Mr Datu Qamarul Zaman [name as received], vice speaker of the Malaysian parliament.

The delegation consists of members of parliament, politicians, newsmen from Malaysia and Indonesia.

During the meeting, Prince Sultan welcomed the members of the two [as received] delegation and explained to them the measures undertaken by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to defend its lands and achievements.

Answering questions raised by reporters of the delegation, Prince Sultan said the multinational forces deployed in the kingdom and the region will depart as soon as an official cease-fire agreement is announced.

Prince Sultan emphasize that the political support of the kingdom to the Palestinian question will continue and the Palestinian cause will be given top priority regardless the position of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) over the recent events of the region.

Speaking on the occasion, the leader of the delegation expressed thanks and appreciation to the government of custodian of the two holy mosques, King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, for its constant concern on the Islamic sanctuaries and for the kind invitation extended to the delegation to visit the holy sites in Mecca and Medina.

He said their tour in the holy sites enables them to uncover the lies and the fabricated reports spread by some hostile and rented media over the situation there.

Datu Qamarul Zaman reiterated the full support of Malaysia and Indonesia to the measures made by the kingdom of Saudi Arabia to defend its territories and sanctuaries.

Kingdom Reiterates Support for Arab League

LD0603071991 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 2025 GMT 5 Mar 91

[Text] Cairo, 5 Mar (SPA)—Tahir Radwan, permanent delegate of the Kingdom to the Arab League, stressed that the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has paid and still pays its contribution to the general budget of the Arab League in full and not by installments. In a statement to SPA, he added that the Kingdom paid its contribution for 1991, which amounts to well over $3.8 million in one lump sum.

He explained that the Kingdom has, since the inception of the League, been giving material and moral backing to the league. He noted that the Kingdom has always supported the Arab League in all that serves the joint Arab interests. The permanent delegate of the Kingdom to the Arab League yesterday handed the contribution of the Kingdom for this year to As'ad al-As'ad acting secretary general of the Arab League.

Palestinians Congratulate King on Liberation

LD0603191291 Riyadh Saudi Arabian Television Network in Arabic 1800 GMT 6 Mar 91

[Text] King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz Al Sa'ud, custodian of the two holy mosques, received a cable from Sa'id Khalil Muzayyin [name as received], alias Abu-Hisham, the former Fatah representative in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the responsible official of the Jerusalem committee, in which he expressed, in the name of the Palestinian community in the Kingdom and the Gulf, the warmest heartfelt congratulations on the decisive victory in the liberation of fraternal Kuwait from the treacherous aggression.

Abu-Hisham added that the sons of the Palestine people realize that this aggression was detrimental to their just cause and holy struggle. He praised the Kingdom's constant stand on Palestine, as land, as people, and as struggle, a stand based on support, aid and care.

The custodian of the two holy mosque thanked Abu-Hisham and sons of the Palestine community for their good feelings. He prayed to God Almighty to realize the objectives and aspirations of the fraternal Palestinian people.

New Kind of Arab Solidarity Urged

PM0503105091 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 4 Mar 91 p 9

[Editorial: "What Arab State Of Affairs?"]

[Text] Before the wounds have had time to heal and the blood and tears to dry, some people are already saying: Let Arab solidarity return as it was before, and some, like King Husayn, have gone so far as to congratulate the Kuwaiti people—"against whom he conspired"—on their return to their homeland, and to talk at length about Arab tolerance and generosity.

King Husayn, who in the eighties publicly apologized to Syria and admitted—on television—to making a mistake, is now playing with words in Amman and wants to forget the past. The Arabs are used to forgetting the past in his regard, whether in connection with what his ancestors did or what he himself did against his nation, his people, and his brothers.

How could the "brothers" forget what has happened now, let alone the past, having seen the lords of conspiracy—from Baghdad to Amman and Sanaa—at the height of their deviation, distributing the war booty among themselves and parcelling out the country.

That language is not suitable now for a return to so-called Arab solidarity. New meanings, a new life, and a new world are imprinted on Arab minds, and particularly on those who have fought this war and triumphed through their own and their friends' efforts and through the depth of their international alliances. They are under no obligation to anyone who wants to take the Arab

world back to the dark ages which produced playboys who wanted to ride on the nation's back to serve their own petty aims and ambitions.

The new Arab alliance will never forget or overlook the past without taking to task those who supported the tyrant and created ridiculous, comical illusions for him, because, if these states of the new alliance did so, they would not be forgiven by the Iraqi people, who have suffered so much as a result of the tyrant's dreams and of those who cheer and applaud him.

They will never forget those who ignored the invasion of Kuwait and concentrated on the foreign forces, without even bothering to blame Saddam—who rejected offer after offer from all over the world.

It would be a sign of ignorance and an insult to the nation's faculties, mind, and heart if the calls to let bygones be bygones draw any response, unless such a response is based on principles and views different from and contrary to what happened in the past, because that spared nothing, violated every sanctity, and destroyed all brotherhood and friendship. This nation cannot return to its previous state of affairs, to the same words and expressions, and to the same vocabularly of pretense of fraternity and common fate, pending another adventure that would destroy everything and cause regret for the loss of yet another opportunity.

The apologies, justifications, pursuit of mediations, and pleas are unacceptable in this Arab phase, oriented toward the future in search of a flourishing Arab era of respect for minds before emotions and in which issues are discussed on the basis of equal and common interests and rights.

Jordan's King Said Rethinking Saddam Support

PM0503122491 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 3 Mar 91 p 4

[Dr. Ghazi al-Qusaybi article: "Clever Husayn Abandons Stupid Saddam Husayn"]

[Text] The hawk of Quraysh [ancient Mecca tribe; reference to King Husayn of Jordan], who recommended the destruction of Kuwait's oil wells and the pollution of the environment, has, to quote poet Nizar Qabbani and singer Najat al-Saghirah, come back with a childish innocence in his eyes to tell me that I am his comrade and his only love [quotes from a famous Arab love song].

The hawk of Quraysh has come up with a strange and suspect speech lasting some 40 minutes in which he says everything and covers every subject and can be summed up in the phrase, "let bygones be bygones."

The hawk of Quraysh declared that he always opposed Iraq's occupation of Kuwait. This is the same hawk of Quraysh who urged the world to join in the holy jihad alongside Saddam Husayn to help him keep his loot after the desert storm blew up. He did not say a single word about Kuwait then.

Now the hawk of Quraysh is saying that he "is celebrating the return of Kuwait... with the people of Kuwait." This is the same hawk of Quraysh who last month sent his arms to kill the Kuwaiti people!!!

This is the same person who was thrilled and overjoyed when Kuwait was occcupied and who, riding his motorbike, shouted at the top of his voice, "how sweet is death, O Arabs."

The same hawk of Quraysh who said that Saddam Husayn occupied Kuwait to liberate Jerusalem is now celebrating the liberation of Kuwait with us!!!

He says that a new chapter of "love, amity, and tolerance" must be opened. This is the same person who ignobly sponsored the conference of murderers and butchers led by George Habash and Nayif Hawatimah and the rest of that scum.

This is the same person who viewed with pleasure and satisfaction the call made by his "parliament" for the murder of the "rulers" who did not accept Saddam Husayn's onslaught and did not bless his plundering of Kuwait.

This is the same hawk of Quraysh who ordered his radio station to broadcast the good news of Saddam Husayn's missile attacks on Riyadh and the "pleasant" results of that attack, and who turned his captial into one of hate and spite against Kuwait and the Gulf.

Now the hawk of Quraysh—who clung to the dead international order to the end—is preaching a new international order. He, who was the greatest ally of democracy's greatest enemy ever, is now hailing democracy.

Now he is saying that he "anticipated all that has happened" but all he really predicted was that Saddam's occupation of Kuwait would continue.

He, who did his utmost to paralyze international cooperation and to prevent the liberation of Kuwait, is now talking about "international cooperation."

The hawk of Quraysh is now saying that he "opens his arms to all," but he is the one who refused to open his arms to the Kuwaiti popular delegation which was warmly received everywhere except in Amman.

So the bactracking serial has begun. This week it was the hawk of Quraysh, next week it will be Yasir 'Arafat, and then the rest of the colluding hypocritical gang.

Remember the contents of the speech delivered by the hawk of Quraysh. They will be repeated in every speech: "new chapter," "new page," "curtain drawn on the tragedy," "love," "reconstruction," and so on.

The "Tikrit calf" has fallen and so have the knives, and the comrades and friends have dispersed.

What does the environment-polluting hawk of Quraysh think? Does he think we are a toy in his hands?

Press Views Algerian, Tunisian Stances on War

LD0503102791 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 0835 GMT 5 Mar 91

[From the Press Review]

[Excerpt] Riyadh, 5 Mar (SPA)—In its editorial AL-MADINAH said that what happened in Kuwait never happened in ancient history and should not happen in modern history. The paper noted the blessing expressed by the Algerian media to the aggression and its defense of the tyranny of Saddam Husayn.

The paper wondered: What did Kuwaiti do to Algeria so that it would hurry to defend a war criminal and his henchmen? How can its media disown legitimacy and freedom and side with a terrorist camp, the like of which history has never witnessed in terms of persisting with his crimes and prolonged humiliation of his people.

The paper also wondered: What did the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia do to Algeria so that we now hear such abuses, provocations, and continuous irresponsible views against the Kingdom and its Arab and Islamic stances?

The paper said that the Algerians might not read history well, even recent history. If they read this history, they would realize that we were with them in the trenches of liberation as we were with them in the battles of Arabization. We were with them during the battle of Arabization when the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia hosted hundreds of Algerian students to study at schools and institutes in Saudi Arabia, thousands of whom graduated and returned to Algeria.

We were with them during the battle of Arabization when we dispatched Saudi lecturers to teach at schools and institutes in Algeria for many years. How can we then explain these strange and astonishing allegations?

Could we find one single answer for these spasmodic stances and this media war? The paper indicated that there are not yet any answers to these questions.

AL-RIYAD dealt in its editorial with the stance of a number of Arab countries which have supported the Iraqi regime's treacherous aggression against the fraternal state of Kuwait. The paper pointed out the stance of Algeria and Tunisia and the hue and cry of their media over the Baghdad regime following the liberation of Kuwait and repelling of aggression. AL-RIYAD wondered what all that is worth and what were the reasons behind such animosity toward the Gulf states. It replied that the stability and development being witnessed by the Gulf states are the enemy of every sick and facist regime which cannot find bases for progress toward stability. It added: And this is the big secret. [passage omitted]

Spokesman Says Ten Army Divisions Disbanded

NC0603174491 Baghdad Domestic Service in Arabic 1728 GMT 6 Mar 91

[Text] A military spokesman has stated the following: In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful. The circumstances after 2 August 1990 necessitated the formation of new divisions in addition to the original ground forces corps. Because circumstances have changed now, it has been decided to disband the following divisions: 50th, 49th, 48th, 46th, 45th, 42th, 31th, 30th, 29th, and 26th.

[Dated] 18 Sh'aban 1411 Hegira, corresponding to 6 March 1991

Claims on Civilian Death Toll, Damage Questioned

AU0603164291 Paris AFP in English 1626 GMT 6 Mar 91

[Text] Brussels, March 6 (AFP) — The Iraqi claim that 50,000 civilians had been killed during the Gulf war was greatly exaggerated, a Belgian member of the European parliament said here Wednesday [6 March] following a trip to Iraq.

Paul Staes, member of a Flemish ecological party, drove to Baghdad by car last Friday, and returned to the Jordanian capital on Sunday.

Addressing a press conference, he quoted several sources in Baghdad as saying that the civilian death toll was somewhere between 3,000 and 10,000.

But he warned of the danger of malnutrition in Baghdad, and the risks of widespread disease among civilians.

Mr. Staes said his sources included a representative of the International Committee of the Red Cross, Belgian missionaries, journalists, Iraqi security officers and ordinary people in the street.

He said he had crossed Baghdad six times, from the outer suburbs to the centre city, and was struck by how little civilian damage was caused given the extent of the bombing. He attributed this to the precision of the bombing.

But he said there was suspicion in the Iraqi capital that United Nations economic sanctions were specifically aimed at starving the population so that it would turn against Iraqi President Saddam Husayn. "If this is true, I think it is an abominable thing to do," he said, and called on the Belgian Government to summon a meeting of the U.N. Security Council next month to reconsider the strategy.

Belgium is currently a non-permanent member of the Security Council, and is due to chair its meetings during April.

Baghdad Radio Talks Discuss Situation

Country Remains 'in Control'

NC0703081891 Baghdad Domestic Service in Arabic 0546 GMT 7 Mar 91

[Unattributed talk]

[Text] Dear brothers: The enemies who think that they can hurt Iraq are making a mistake. Moreover, in doing so, they commit two sins: one against themselves because they base their judgments on illusions; and the other lies in the fact that they show clear ignorance of Iraq's capabilities. This is proved by the fact that throughout all the events it witnessed, Iraq emerged live, active, in control of itself, its present, and future, and ready to join the convoy of immortal life.

The enemies do not realize this high Iraqi ability. Although they have used everything against Iraq, they met solid failure. They directed scores of poisonous radio stations against us, disseminating rumors, lies, and sick conceptions. But all this has gone with the wind, and Iraq, with its lands, skies, and creative builders, continues to declare its vivid existence very strongly.

However, the energy we are saving for the future dictates that we be (?aware of) the evil acts targeting us. The parties to the conspiracy still (word indistinct) us, dream of directing their evil against us, and disclose their malicious objectives openly. But this in itself makes it easier for us to foil these objectives, because right must beat wrong.

We see the renewal of life in Iraq every day; this foils all conspiracies by all our different enemies, and completely (word indistinct) from the sickness in their hearts, which are full of corruption and vice. This renewal will reach its highest stages as soon as possible, and those who have sick hearts will know once again that their failure is nothing but [words indistinct]. Iraq won, and [words indistinct] of the nation, defending its principles, shouldering its burden, and leading its struggle and jihad. Iraq is providing a model of construction and creativity, and is representing the future through its present actions. We are marching forward; the road is straight and open. All glory to you, O Iraq.

Western Media Campaigns Assailed

NC0703065791 Baghdad Domestic Service in Arabic 0530 GMT 7 Mar 91

[Unattributed talk]

[Excerpt] Every medication pill must taste delicious so that it may be swallowed easily. This is the prevalent basis of the Western media, particularly the U.S. media when they seek to peddle a plot or disseminate a rumor and look for someone to believe them.

The Western media have never been on the side of the Arabs or their issues. The course that is being pursued by

the Western media is well known to the Iraqis and the Arabs. All of us recall that role played by the Western media long years ago, specifically during the outbreak of the cholera epidemic in Iraq. We all remember the campaign launched by those media during the immortal nationalization days. We also recall the numerous examples of the vocabulary of lies mounted by those media, which continue to belittle every accomplishment gained by the Iraqis and the Arabs and harm every step forward we made. If they fail to achieve their goals, they offer you a delicious plate of lies mixed with facts and poison mixed with reason.

This course is not only practiced against the Iraqis and the Arabs alone, but also against all the countries of this wide world, which they call the Third World. The objective of the Western media is crystal clear. The principal objective of everything in the West, the West which had colonialized the world for long decades and sucked the blood of its nations, is to realize a designated target. The economy, politics, science, technology, and media are all designed to serve objectives that strengthen the influence and goals of the imperialist octopus. [passage omitted]

'New World Order' Attacked

NC0603184491 Baghdad Domestic Service in Arabic 1552 GMT 6 Mar 91

[Unattributed talk]

[Text] After the Soviet Union fell back to treat its domestic issues, it became clear that the U.S. Administration began to act as the only superpower that could exercise influence on the world and that it was no longer an administration for the United States of America alone, but an administration for the whole world community.

In light of those developments and concepts, it was not surprising for the United States to act singlehandedly in international and regional crises and problems and to seek to force its viewpoint and solutions on those crises even it had to wage wars on those who confronted its tyranny. In short, it has even begun to impose its dictatorship and separate hegemony on the world.

The concept of the new world order, which the Bush administration has raised and whose praises it began to sing and to market on every occasion, was only a cover to give legitimacy and collectivism to the U.S. Administration's dictatorship and absolute control of the resources of the peopie, particularly the oppressed ones, and of their interests and destinies.

What is more, it has begun to practice its hegemony on the UN Security Council and the United Nations and to interfere flagrantly in their affairs in accordance with its standards and interests. This is what it has done before and during its unjust aggression against Iraq and also after the cease-fire. It has confiscated all of the UN Security Council's powers and installed itself in its place, and it is still issuing the resolutions it wants disregarding all clauses of the international law and the principles of right, justice, and fairness.

This reality of the U.S. Administration's trespassing on the UN Security Council's powers and rights has made the UN secretary general admit recently that the United States has confiscated the UN Security Council's rights. It also made him say: Even if it appears that the United States is fulfilling the duties of the council, the council will regain its rights after the approval of the cease-fire.

This is the United States, fulfilling the duties of the council. This means only that the U.S. Administration [words indistinct] issues resolutions and also implements them.

What the U.S. Administration is doing these days against Iraq in terms of violations and provocative and terrorist actions clearly embodies the true nature of the new world order which America calls for and plans to establish. It is an order that allows its aircraft to break the sound barrier over the city of Baghdad. It is also an order that authorizes it to deploy forces aboard six helicopters in the area of the 160-km marker on the Baghdad-Amman highway. Of course, these flagrant aggressive actions do not only conflict with the bases and rules that have been agreed upon during the military meeting that was held on 2 March, but also completely conflict with the provisions of international law, the UN Charter, and the rules of justice. In light of this, Bush's new world order is the one that enables America to impose its complete hegemony on the world and to liquidate all the issues of national liberation and humanitarian struggle. It is not only this, but the new world order that is wanted by the United States is the one that also gives it the opportunity to control its allies. This particularly concerns those about whom the United States has begun to express concern in light of their growing economic and political force and their possibilities for becoming aroused again, for instnace the united Germany and Japan. However, the paradox here is that these allies, which are not ignorant of the U.S. Administration's plans and what it seeks to achieve, are the ones that implement its plans and aggressive actions. They are also the ones who take it upon themselves to resolve its exacerbating economic problems and crises.

There is growing Arab and international awareness that Bush's new world order is not aimed just at returning the international community to the hateful colonialist era, but also at returning the world to the law of jungle, where no law prevails except that of force, tyranny, and usurpation. The foreign minister of fraternal Algeria was completely right when he said that he does not believe in the new world order and when he expressed his concern over entering into an age of new world anarchy.

Those who remain silent over the U.S. Administration's actions, violations, crimes, and new colonialist course and those who appease it and peddle its lie of the new world order are certainly making a fatal and devastating

mistake. This is especially since this order will affect them with its consequences and results before anyone else, particularly when the administration of the war criminal Bush will become an administration for the entire international community, and expose its true miserable face, something which is currently taking place.

Future of U.S. 'Lackeys' Predicted

NC0603180691 Baghdad Domestic Service in Arabic 1533 GMT 6 Mar 91

[Unattributed talk]

[Text] With their familiar impudence and their capacity for swaggering and misleading, the criminal aggressors, amid the remnants of their unsuccessful dreams dissipated by the steadfastness of heroic Iraq, its courageous Armed Forces, and its struggling people led by struggler leader Saddam Husayn, are attempting to portray their defeat as a victory and their murder of women and children as an accomplishment.

What gives most cause for wonderment and even ridicule is what the lackeys of the U.S. Administration and its slaves from among the oil thieves and the advocates of disgrace, ignorance, and treason are trying to depict to themselves that they are well and in the best possible condition. They do not know that not only have they served as vehicles for the aggression to mount and cross into Iraq, but that they also turned from a state of concealed subservience to that of overt subservience. After having sold off everything—namely, their honor and dignity and that little margin of outward independence and freedom, albeit sham independence and freedom—they have now returned to an unenviable state of direct occupation. From now on, it will be perfectly natural for the occupiers, be they American or English, to step up their direct interference in all the specifics of their domestic affairs, when before, this interference took place behind curtains and through secret channels. To put it more clearly, it could be said that they returned to the status of protectorates and colonies which the pro forma declaration of independence of their statelets has made us forget. Perhaps this will not become known to them soon, and perhaps it might not become known to their people, but after a while they will feel the full crunch of the matter.

Needless to say, this tacitly means that they have automatically given the Zionists, whether they like it or not, the right to take part in occupying them and controlling their will, since the Zionists fully participated in the aggression against Iraq under the so-called alliance. As things stand now, we see what was called the Arab League becoming a captive to Husni, who laid his hands on it. As things are now, it is natural for us to say, since Husni is the unrivaled partner of the Zionists, that these ignorant and agent rulers have led their countries and statelets once again into a dark tunnel. Not only this, but unless the people change these ruling cliques, which is not unexpected, it will not be unlikely, as the imperialist-Zionist ploy will show in the days to come, for the British and the Americans themselves to change these cliques after they have played their treacherous roles in full and become exposed to their people, the Arab masses, and the world at large, and to replace them with new rulers to be chosen from among those who are agreeable to America and Britain. However, all of this will change nothing of the truth and will remain within the confines of sheer formality.

Although we do not know whether the Western countries that took part in the aggression against Iraq have already divided the spoils and areas of influence among themselves, or if this is yet to come, we do not rule out the possibility that a struggle might ensue once again among these powers, each of which believes it has a right to have a full share as a price for its participation in the aggression and its submission to America and Zionism. While the word "no" that Iraq has said to the invaders still echoes, and at a time when Iraq has shattered the conspiracy by its heroic steadfastness and its outstanding resistance and has emerged from the duel with a triumphant will and a firm belief in its unshakeable position and the principled choices of its people, we find that the shortsightedness of the conspirators and their agentry were and will continue to be crucial factors in many downfalls that will soon befall them separately and collectively, with their countries standing to be the biggest losers.

Hostile Forces Cautioned on 'Divide and Rule'

NC0703091791 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0825 GMT 7 Mar 91

[Text] Baghdad, 7 Mar (INA)—AL-'IRAQ warns against the attempts of the hostile forces which seek to annihilate Iraq by disintegrating its national unity in accordance with their inherited colonialist principle "divide and rule."

In today's editorial, the paper says that the hostile campaign and all antagonists are all trying to dismember Iraq and strike at its national unity. AL-'IRAQ stresses that Iraq belongs to all its citizens and sons, adding that this principled fact constitutes the solid grounds for Iraq's political and constitutional base which only relies on its national unity.

The paper draws the attention of all the sons of Iraq to the attempts of the colonialist forces and urged them to confront their destructive deeds by strengthening their national unity. It says that the current stage is one of challenge, and under such circumstances there is a pressing need for unity of ranks and any tendency to harm this unity would be a sort of sabotage.

AL-'IRAQ goes on to say that Iraq—Arabs and Kurds, Christians and Muslims, Shi'ites and Sunnis, and all its other sons—is the homeland in which all calls for division die out. This is because Iraq has always and through all eras been the homeland which insured the security

and welfare of everyone. It emphasizes that the calls for division and disintegration will not be the true voice and will not find the required response. The mountain and the land will only be an arena for Iraq to confront the enemies whose sole objective is to harm and humiliate its citizens.

Editorial Cited on 'Historic' Leadership

NC0603223191 Baghdad Domestic Service in Arabic 1201 GMT 6 Mar 91

[Text] AL-THAWRAH today publishes an editorial entitled "With United Resolve and Leadership, Objectives of the Aggression Were Foiled." The editorial says:

Steadfastness and firmness have never depended upon material potential alone, but have always relied on strength of will, leadership, and conviction, and what these qualities offer in terms of bolstering the firmness and determination of the people in historic moments of jihad—particularly in the face of outside threats and major challenges.

The calculations of Iraq's enemies have never been anything but material calculations that measure the potential of Iraqi and Arab steadfastness, and their ability to confront the enemy, according to purely tangible standards. In all these hostile calculations, the results of these schemes on paper contradicted their actual results on the ground. This is because they did not make sufficient allowances for the will of the people, and because, basically and despite all of their claims, they do not respect the people, but seek to suppress the nations, plunder them, and confiscate their rights and role through direct occupation or by installing lackey agents in the seats of power.

The Iraqis and Arabs recall a number of examples from their recent past. They remember the result of the tripartite aggression against Egypt in 1956; they remember the result of the nationalization battle [in Iraq] in 1972; they remember the results of the eight-year [Iraq-Iran] war; and they also remember the steadfastness of Beirut in 1986 [year as heard] and the continuation of the intifadah for the past three years. They also remember, and continue to experience, Iraq's steadfastness in the face of the blockade, the invasion, and the aggression which has been going on in various forms for more than one full year.

Whenever the Iraqis recall their experiences of struggle against their enemies, their firmness and resolution grow, because they draw from their history—the history of their nation as well as their national history—all those shining things that feed the spirit and the will, and invoke their pride and chivalry to confront their enemies—none of which has been absent in this aggressive war against Iraq and all its sons and daughters.

Despite all the defeats reaped by the old-time and neo-colonialists, and despite the fact that the contemporary history of the Arabs as a nation records the beginning of the triumph of its will with the departure of the foreign colonial power and then the fall of the agent regimes installed by that colonialist power, we see the aggression that targets Iraq ignoring all the facts and bringing in everything rejected by the Arab nation—colonialist and imperialist armies, as well as agents tied to the heels of the invading armies.

We also see the U.S. Administration, which leads the herd of the aggressors, treading the same path as that of the defeated colonialists, which it inherited; it even uses their same methods, and employs what was left of their instruments and what remained of their harvest to cultivate backwardness and (?division).

Certainly, the only Arabs known to Bush are a handful of abject agents. Therefore, with his colonialist, racist mentality that holds the people in contempt, he imagines that the Iraqi phenomenon is strange to the Arab reality. With such an imagination, he deliberately ignores the ties of hope and destiny and the unity of objective and struggle that connects the Iraqi phenomenon with the Arab nation. Otherwise, how can Bush explain all those popular Arab positions that support Iraq in the land of the Arabs, and wherever the masses are able to express their will?

The enemies are continuing the war against Iraq. They continue their provocations and blockade, and avoid the dues of the cease-fire. With this deliberate policy, they cling to what remains of an illusion and a wager to harm Iraq by harming its will, firmness, and leadership. They want the Arabs without the Iraq of the historic leadership and the will, because they want them deprived of the hope, the rights, the presence, and the role; and, as long as the Iraqi phenomenon runs contrary to the herd of the abject agents, the objectives of the aggression will be declared bankrupt and impotent.

As confirmed by the progress and the chapters of the conspiracy, the blockade, the hostility, and the aggression, the Iraqi phenomenon is the target of colonialist, racist Bush and his allies and agents. This Iraqi phenomenon is not without roots. It is deep-rooted in a historic experience that Iraq is living through, an experience which at the same time created the factors of steadfastness and the ability to resist in order to achieve the goal. This historic achievement is the unity of the people and the leadership, and the unity of their wills and objectives. Therefore, leader Saddam Husayn stands lofty as a historic symbol for all sons of Iraq and the Arab nation, because he has never wagered on anyone but the people and the fact that they are an inexhaustible source of jihad and building. With the historic nature of the wager and the building, Iraq has been transformed into an impregnable, invincible fortress. This is precisely the secret of Iraq's steadfastness, the stability of its firm resolve, and its ability to resist.

The enemies are now linking the return of the decline of the Arabs for many decades to come with the deprivation of Iraq by taking away from the Arabs their unified Iraq and its firm resolve and historic leadership.

The Iraq of steadfastness has managed to surprise enemies time and again. Likewise, it is capable now, with its historic leadership—represented by mujahid Saddam Husayn—and with the will and firmness of its people, of foiling the objectives of the aggression after it emerges victorious with a firm resolve and with all the determination and means to march ahead and rebuild from positions of glory and honor.

Reportage on Reconstruction, Repair of Country

Efforts To Restore Electricity Cited

NC0703113391 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1000 GMT 7 Mar 91

[Text] Baghdad, 7 Mar (INA)—An official at the Ministry of Industry and Military Industrialization has described the damage to electricity generators and distribution networks during enemy air and missile bombing of Baghdad and other Iraqi cities as destruction and a great burden.

Mr. Layth al-Shaykhali, director general of the general establishment for electricity distribution in Baghdad, told AL-'IRAQ that electricity workers and engineers are going all out to find resources to fuel electricity networks throughout Iraq attempting to return life to normal.

(?Because) the destruction the allied forces deliberately inflicted on electricity resources in Iraq—electricity being a pillar of modern life and a generator of production—was so terrible that whatever services we provide will appear minor compared to the enormous damage inflicted.

Dr. al-Shaykhali pointed out that attempts to provide electricity fueling resources are reflected in efforts to repair and operate some old and small generators.

He said specialized working teams were dispatched to [work on] power lines, transformer stations, and distribution networks with a view to restoring electricity to some regions, maintaining full control, and expediting the completion of the required work. He said there is now emphasis on providing electricity to residential areas and some facilities that have direct bearing on citizens and normal life.

Roads, Bridges Under Repair

NC0703103291 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0910 GMT 7 Mar 91

[Text] Baghdad, 7 Mar (INA)—The Iraqi ministries and authorities concerned are taking swift practical measures to repair the roads and bridges that were subjected to enemy air and missile attacks in Baghdad and all the governorates.

The director general of the general authority for roads and bridges in the Ministry of Housing and Reconstruction has revealed that a higher committee has been formed under the chairmanship of Husayn Kamil Hasan, minister of the Industry and Military Industrialization, to supervise this wide-scale campaign.

'Adnan Ahmad [not further identified] has told AL-'IRAQ that the campaign aims also at building alternative bridges to link the townships to the major roads. He said that the departments of the Ministries of Industry and Military Industrialization, Oil, and Housing and Reconstruction, and the Baghdad Municipality will participate in this activity.

The spokesman [as received] noted that the higher committee has formed two technical committees. These two committees have held several meetings to prepare a comprehensive study on how to repair the bridges and on ways of securing alternative means, and to discuss each case separately and present proposals on how to remedy it.

The director general of the general authority for roads and bridges in Iraq said that the al-Shuhada' [martyrs] bridge, which links al-Karkh and al-Rasafah with Baghdad, will be reopened in a few days time as the repair of damage caused to it as a result of the American and allied air raids continues.

He denounced the criminal and barbaric method the allied forces had deliberately pursued in destroying the economic and civilian installations and utilities.

He said that that hostile and bestial propensity surfaced during the two committees' tour of all the governorates where it became apparent that the aggressors' criminal attacks included even small bridges in villages and rural areas.

Telecommunications Buildings Renovated

NC0603204391 Baghdad Domestic Service in Arabic 1900 GMT 6 Mar 91

[Text] The Ministry of Housing and Reconstruction, in coordination with the Ministry of Transport and Communications, has begun work to repair and renovate the telephone exchange and telecommunications buildings damaged by the treacherous U.S.-Zionist-Atlantic aggression against our country.

In a statement to INA, Tahir Muhammad Hassun al-Marzuq, minister of housing and reconstruction, said that implementing leader President Saddam Husayn's orders to secure the necessary services for citizens, the ministry has begun taking quick measures to secure telephone services in cooperation with the Ministry of Transport and Communications. The ministry has also begun to take quick measures to assess the damage caused by the treacherous aggression against our struggling country, especially to roads and bridges. The nature

of the damage has been defined through quick studies which have given priority to securing traffic on highways connecting Iraqi towns.

The minister of housing and reconstruction stressed that these studies will be implemented in the coming days in coordination with the relevant ministries. He added that the ministry will start implementing the works to be assigned to it as part of a comprehensive plan to reconstruct and rebuild the utilities damaged by the aggression throughout Iraq after priorities are set by the specialized and concerned state departments.

Rations Increased by 25 Percent

NC0603190291 Baghdad Domestic Service in Arabic 1700 GMT 6 Mar 91

[Text] Minister of Trade Muhammad Mahdi Salih al-Rawi has stressed that leader President Saddam Husayn's order to increase by 25 percent the citizens' quotas of babies' milk, sugar, and soap, in addition to the possibility of increasing the monthly rations of other foodstuffs, embodies his excellency's interest in securing the citizens' essential needs despite the circumstances of the aggressive economic blockade imposed on Iraq.

In a statement to INA, the minister of trade said that the leader President's noble gesture represents a new page in the historic showdown waged by our great people in defense of their will, pride, and dignity.

He added that the ministry has completed supplying the agents with their quotas for March and April in Baghdad and all the governorates. The ministry will start delivering the quotas for May in the next few days under the new plan and acting on the order of leader President Saddam Husayn.

The minister of trade said that the leader president's noble gesture in increasing the supply rations for the citizens comes in the light of the ministry's strategic supply of foodstuffs which it stocked before the beginning of the aggressive blockade imposed on Iraq.

In the name of the workers in the ministry, the companies, and the department attached to it, the minister of trade reaffirmed the pledge to leader President Saddam Husayn to make more efforts to serve our people under the triumphant leadership of his excellency.

Transport Official Discusses Services

NC0303065191 Baghdad Domestic Service in Arabic 0520 GMT 3 Mar 91

[Interview with Aysar Safi, director general of the public transport establishment, by unidentified radio reporter; date not given—recorded]

[Text] [reporter] Brother listeners, the public transport establishment has been providing services to the citizens, and this shows the establishment's interest in providing public transport to them. How does Aysar al-Safi, director general of the establishment, evaluate the work of his establishment?

[Safi] An assessment of the establishment's work actually [words indistinct]. It is known that the public transport establishment is one of the services which maintains direct contact with the brother citizen. The leader president, may God protect him, has directed that the service departments provide the best services to the citizens. We have taken this directive into consideration in our work each day, not only on special days. The establishment has run buses to provide services to all the citizens in Baghdad and in all provinces.

Without appearing partial to this establishment, I must say that it embarked on its work with high competence from the first days of the imperialist aggression against Iraq. It operated its fleet with greater capacity than during the days prior to the aggression, exceeding it by 150 percent. These are not just words. The brother citizen can appreciate the situation. Thank God, this establishment was able to perform the services required of it [words indistinct], and thereby we have accomplished what has been required of us by the citizens.

We shall resume evening and morning service. There are studies for the resumption of services on some lines that had been canceled earlier because of technical considerations. God willing, we will fulfill all the needs of the citizens in the coming stage. All the members of the establishment, from the first to the last employee, have adopted the slogan of making every effort to provide a better service to the citizen.

[Reporter] In concluding this interview, we extend our thanks to Aysar Safi, the director general of the establishment.

Rebels Say Al-Basrah Remains in Insurgent Hands

NC0703110491 Paris AFP in English 1016 GMT 7 Mar 91

[Text] Tehran, March 7 (AFP)—Al-Basrah is still in the hands of insurgent forces, an Iraqi Shiite resistance group said here Thursday, discounting U.S. reports that the key southern Iraqi port had been recaptured by troops loyal to President Saddam Husayn.

A spokesman for the Tehran-based Supreme Assembly of the Islamic Revolution in Iraq (SAIRI), said insurgents were also in control of another southern city, al-'Amarah, as well as Khanaqin in the north.

The communities of al-Qa'im, Sangar, Tall 'Afar, Wadi 'Ukash, al-Nasiriyah and several other central and northern cities were in the hands of "the population," the spokesman told AFP.

He charged that the West was "committing a new error by supporting Saddam Husayn."

The British newspaper THE INDEPENDENT said Thursday that President Husayn's elite Republican Guard had retaken control of al-Basrah overnight Tuesday, but that rebels held al-Nasiriyah.

The Republican Guard had moved out from the centre of the city in tanks, crushing barricades put up by rebels and issuing megaphone calls for them to lay down their arms, according to a report from one of the paper's three correspondents in the region.

Another correspondent reported from al-Nasiriyah that insurgents were in complete control of the town, quoting the rebels as saying that the town governor and leading officials had been executed.

Capture of Generals Claimed

NC0603202791 Damascus SANA in Arabic 1726 GMT 6 Mar 91

[Text] Beirut, 6 Mar (SANA)—The [word indistinct] revolutionaries in al-Basrah have stormed a military airbase where they [word indistinct] a number of missiles, a helicopter, 50 tanks, electronic equipment and radars, and several high-tech computers that are used for military purposes.

This came in a statement issued by the Supreme Assembly of the Islamic Revolution in Iraq. The statement says that the uprising in northern Iraq has led to the surrender of the 24th Regiment and the capture of (Staff Brigadier General Muq al-Bishar Mahmud,) commander of the 24th Division, and (?37) other officers of various military ranks. Among the captured officers are:

Staff Major General 'Abd-al-Majid 'Abbas Wahib.
Staff Maj. Gen. 'Abd-al-Majid Khudayr.
Staff Brig. Gen. 'Abd-al-Sattar 'Abbud.
Staff Colonel Badr Zaydan.
Staff Col. 'Abd-al-Sattar Jawwad Hamzah.
Col. Ghassan Jamil Muhammad.
Staff Lieutenant Colonel Samir Ka'ud Khadr.
Major Sa'di Jabr Radi.
Ranyah District Officer Hushmand Musfata Fita.
Captain Kazim 'Abdallah Jabr.
First Lieutenant Khalil Kamal Khalil.

Clashes Detailed

NC0603201591 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 1615 GMT 6 Mar 91

[Text] Bayan Jabr, an official of the Supreme Assembly of the Islamic Revolution in Iraq, has announced that fierce clashes took place yesterday morning between the Iraqi popular masses who are revolting, and the Iraqi regime's forces, near the bridge linking Abu al-Khusayb and al-Basrah in southern Iraq.

In a statement distributed in Damascus today, Jabr said that the clashes took place when two tanks of the Iraqi regime attempted to cross the bridge. The uprising intercepted and destroyed the tanks on the bridge, stopping the advance of other tanks of the Iraqi regime's forces. The regime's forces then began shelling the residential neighborhoods in al-Basrah, demolishing a number of houses and killing a number of people. Following this shelling, the regime's forces were able to cross the bridge and enter the outskirts of al-Basrah. They were confronted by the men of the uprising and the Iraqi Army Forces which had joined them, inflicting heavy losses on them. They damaged 12 tanks, seized three others, and forced the Iraqi regime's forces to retreat from al-Basrah.

The official noted that information was received this morning indicating that more than 3,500 Iraqi soldiers had joined the men of the popular uprising in al-Basrah.

Opposition Leaders Comment on Uprising

AU0603143891 Munich SUEDDEUTSCHE ZEITUNG in German 6 Mar 91 p 1

["sc" report: "Major Army Operations Against Opponents of Saddam's Regime"]

[Excerpt] [passage omitted] According to organizations in exile, the uprising in Iraq has spread to almost 40 percent of the country. In addition to the second-largest city, al-Basrah, the holy cities of Karbala' and al-Najaf and the towns of al-'Amarah and al-Nasiriyah, which are located farther in the south and have altogether more than 6 million inhabitants, are affected. These details were reported by Bejan Dschabor [name as published], representative of the Supreme Assembly of the Islamic Revolution in Iraq, in an interview for SUEDDEUTSCHE ZEITUNG. The occupation of Karbala' and al-Najaf by the rebels was confirmed, he said.

Dschabor, who is also the representative of the opposition alliance of 17 Iraqi organizations in exile, including the Kurds and the communists, which operate from Syria, called on the people and governments of the world to provide help for the "Iraqi Intifadah" against "mass murderer" Saddam and his poison gas. "We also would not shrink from accepting help from the United States as was provided in Afghanistan, but so far we have not had any contacts with the United States," he said. Despite widely held views, the Revolution Council—which is dominated by Shiites—is not supported by Iran and is not a tool in Tehran's hands. Only its chairman, Muhammad Bakr al-Hakim, still lives there in exile, he said.

"It is an uprising of the whole nation, not only of a party or a denomination," Dschabor stressed. This is supported by reports from the east Syrian border town of Abu Kamal on bombing and firefights in the Sunni central Iraq, as well as by information from the south. For example, the Sunni population of the town of al-Zubayr, a neighboring town of the metropolis al-Basrah, is participating, he said. Just like communists and all others, christians are fighting in this "revolution against Saddam Husayn." The Spokesmen of the Iraqi Communist Party in Syrian exile confirmed this. For example, many of their partisans, but also a large

number of Shiites were among the 4,000 prisoners freed from al-Basrah prison. "One does not preclude the other," it was stated on both sides. "There are all kinds of combinations."

According to Dschabor, the rebels are not short of weapons. A great army arsenal fell into their hands in al-Basrah, a second in the vicinity will probably be soon open to them. According to Dschabor's information on the events in al-Basrah, 100 tanks and 5,000 soldiers of the Republican Guard tried to invade the city, but they were stopped on a bridge. The major part of the regular troops in al-Basrah handed over their weapons to the rebels, he said. According to the Communist Party large parts of the army are already fighting on their side. Dschabor says the Air Force attacked a palace of the dictator. Figures for the total number of dead or wounded rebels are not available. So far, 20,000 Iraqi fighters in Iranian exile have not intervened.

Dschabor did not want to confirm reports that Iraqi First Deputy Prime Minister Taha Yasin Ramadan and Ezzed Addur [name as published], member of Saddam's Revolution Command Council, had been executed on the state president's orders. The version that the two of them opposed the uprising and were killed in it, just like 17 officers, the mayor of al-Basrah, and Saddam's son 'Uday (26), prevails among his informers in al-Basrah and al-Nasiriyah, he said.

Answering an inquiry, Celal Talabani, chairman of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan [PUK] stated in Damascus that the popular uprising also started in the Kurdish settlement areas in northern Iraq. The settlement areas of about 1 million people around the city of Irbil were freed. This also applies to concentration camps in which members of the Kurdish opposition were detained, he said. On the other hand, in circles of Mesut Barzani's Kurdish Democratic Party (KDP) in Damascus it was stated that the armed fighters are still waiting for the "right moment for an attack." The PUK and the KDP, the two strongest Kurdish associations, are striving for autonomy for their almost 4 million people within the present Iraqi borders, not for an independent state. Both are members of the alliance of 17 organizations. They did not take up arms during the Gulf war, in order to avoid being called traitors. [passage omitted]

SAIRI Denies Issuing Communique on Journalists

LD0603183291 Paris Domestic Service in French 1700 GMT 6 Mar 91

[Excerpts] An Iraqi opposition group, the Supreme Assembly of the Islamic Revolution [SAIRI], announced today that it gave asylum to 21 Western journalists reported missing in the south of the country. This Supreme Council issued a communique in Geneva without giving any details concerning the identity and the nationality of the journalists who were taken in. There is one important indication all the same, these 21 journalists are reported to be in good health.

However, this information has just been denied. Gerard Zenoni comments:

[Zenoni] Yes, it seems that the Shi'ite opposition movements have curious ways of disseminating propaganda. [passage omitted]

A few minutes ago, another communique by the same Islamic Council, which emanated from London this time, let it be understood that the initial information was wrong. It further said that the movement does not have representatives in Switzerland and did not publish a communique. There we are, and we still don't know the fate of the missing journalists.

Opposition Leaders Urge Toppling Regime

NC0203073291 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 0515 GMT 2 Mar 91

[Text] Ayatollah Muhammad Taqiy al-Mudarrisi, a leader of the Islamic opposition in Iraq, has stressed that the country's regime must be toppled. He also emphasized his support for the independence of Iraqi territory and people. In a statement he issued yesterday, al-Mudarrisi appealed to all popular organizations and political parties in the Arab homeland and the Islamic world to show understanding of the Iraqi people's legitimate aspiration to get rid of the ruling regime. He declared that the leaders of the regime are a different matter from Iraq and its people.

His Eminence Hojjat ol-Eslam Muhammad al-Husayni, official spokesman of the Islamic Action Organization in Iraq, has stated that the Iraqi regime's invasion of Kuwait was a dangerous act. In a statement he issued yesterday, Shaykh al-Husayni said that Iraqi citizens will not stop their resistance against the regime which drove the country to the situation in which it currently finds itself. Shaykh al-Husayni asserted that the Iraqi Army has no faith in Saddam Husayn's leadership, inasmuch as he earlier involved it in a bloody war with a Muslim neighbor, Iran, and then involved it in another destructive war in Kuwait. Al-Husayni called on the army and the people to play their roles. He demanded the Iraqi president to resign his post because of his utter failure as a ruler.

Exiled Iraqi Calls for Opposition to Saddam

LD0403072391 London PRESS ASSOCIATION in English 0607 GMT 4 Mar 91

[By Sally Weale]

[Text] Iraqis in exile want to form a provisional government made up of opposition parties opposed to Saddam Husayn's regime, it was said today. Iraqi religious leader Imam Sayed Hussain al-Sader [name as received], speaking in London, urged governments worldwide to break diplomatic ties with the existing regime in Baghdad. He called on them instead to grant recognition to a provisional government committed to holding a free

general election to establish a multi-party democracy within a year of assuming power in Baghdad.

"The Iraqi opposition consisting of the various parties and leading figures all over the world is a genuine force and can reasonably be regarded as the real, legitimate representatives of the Iraqi people," the 46-year-old imam said. "We strongly consider now is the right time for the international community to withdraw its recognition of Saddam and recognize the Iraqi opposition in his place. The provisional government does not yet exist, but it could be ready very soon. We hope our ideas can be developed quickly in discussions with the international community and we are awaiting their signal to go ahead," said the Imam, who is in favor of a moderate Islamic republic in Iraq.

The imam fled Iraq in 1979 after being beaten and tortured with electric shocks during four weeks of interrogation, and came to London six years ago after spending some years in exile in Damascus. He condemned Saddam, saying no one in history has been responsible for more Muslim deaths and claimed the Iraqi people opposed him. "It has broken my heart to see what disasters he has brought on our people in Iraq because of his extreme stupidity. I do not think he can possibly survive in power for much longer because the Iraqi people are burning to be rid of him."

Red Cross Seeks Permission To Visit Provinces

LD0303160191 Bern International Service in English 1530 GMT 3 Mar 91

[Text] The All-Swiss International Committee of the Red Cross [ICRC] says it is seeking permission from Iraq to send its delegates to the Iraqi provinces to assess how to restore health services and water supplies following the Gulf war.

The chief ICRC delegate in Iraq (Andreas Vigor) said the extent of damage from the allied air raids on Iraq's vital installations was not yet known. Mr Vigor said the amount of damage would certainly require a large aid program involving many relief organizations. Relief workers have so far only been allowed access to Baghdad.

Mr Vigor said the ICRC had no information about southern Iraq, which could be in worse condition than Baghdad after six weeks of allied air raids.

Meanwhile an ICRC spokesman in Jordan said there were already 20 delegates in Saudi Arabia visiting an estimated 50,000 Iraqi prisoners.

Netanyahu Interviewed on Israeli Peace Stand

TA0603171691 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1500 GMT 6 Mar 91

[Telephone interview with Deputy Foreign Minister Binyamin Netanyahu by Mikha Friedman—live]

[Text] [Friedman] Shalom.

[Netanyahu] Shalom.

[Friedman] Although we have heard [according to Israeli Ambassador Zalman Shoval] that the U.S. Administration still has no finished political plan, administration officials have already announced publicly that as part of the efforts to introduce a new order to the Middle East, they will want to hear new and daring ideas. Baker is expected in Israel on Monday [11 March]. He will again hear Israel's plan of May 1989, with which he is so familiar. Is it not a waste of his time and ours?

[Netanyahu] Why do you say that? What is wrong with that plan? After all, its basis was proved to be sound and solid. Furthermore, everything that has happened merely served to corroborate this.

[Friedman] I am simply asking whether this can come under the heading of new and daring ideas.

[Netanyahu] It is, naturally, possible to add to and amend any initiative in accordance with the circumstances, but the basic elements we mentioned are that the Arab-Israeli conflict, as it affects relations between countries, should be resolved at the same time as attempts are made to resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. What we have been hearing from the United States in the past few days, in the wake of the war, is that it has in fact accepted this assumption. I believe this is largely thanks to the war.

[Friedman] From feedback you get from the United States, do you think it believes this Israeli peace plan is sufficient to push the process forward?

[Netanyahu] I think they view the initiative differently. The change in the U.S. opinion, which came in the wake of the war, is that whereas before our calls for an end to the state of war with the Arab countries were a cry in the wilderness, now the United States realizes it is necessary to make progress along the two avenues—one involving the countries, and the other involving the Palestinians—and that the two paths are inseparable.

This is an important shift; and I think that after the proper preliminary work here and in the United States, we may get close to a breakthrough. After all, three of the main coalition members are leading Arab countries. We have a peace treaty with one of them, but no such accord with the other two. We are, in effect, in a state of war. Those countries have nevertheless stood, with us, on the same side of the fence in this battle against Iraq. There is no reason why we should not exploit this situation to bring about a dialogue with them in a number of ways and to end the state of war. I think the United States shares our view on that and understands that if it weighs in heavily on the matter, far-reaching changes can occur.

[Friedman] Will Knesset Speaker Dov Shilansky's tour of Hebron and the Golan Heights help the government better relay our message to Baker?

[Netanyahu] I believe it will make no difference either way. After all, our positions are well known. We express them openly; we have never concealed them.

[Friedman] So perhaps this helicopter tour of the country, which you are planning for Baker, can be given up as well?

[Netanyahu] You know, there is a difference between voicing opinions and firsthand impressions. Obviously, when it is Baker who is touring, it is a whole different ballgame. That observation is based on my own personal experience; I have hosted quite a number of visitors—senators, congressmen, and others—on such a tour or flight. This tour is very impressive, and I would not give it up.

[Friedman] You were appointed coordinator of the interministerial team to prepare for Baker's visit, but you gave up that honor. Why? Is it because the foreign minister decided to dispatch Albert Ben-Abu, his adviser on diaspora affairs, and not you to the meeting of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations?

[Netanyahu] I have no idea what you are talking about.

[Friedman] Are you not aware of the fact that he, not you, was sent to that convention?

[Netanyahu] No, no; what I mean is that I am still coordinator of that team, so I do not know what honor you think I gave up. Still, the work is being conducted—and I think that it is important that things be run this way—among the three ministries [the Prime Minister's Office, the Foreign Ministry, and the Defense Ministry]. We are trying, through proper administration, to work out a policy acceptable to all components of the Israeli Government. I think we are progressing in the right direction.

[Friedman] Mr. Netanyahu, one last question—and let me ask you to be brief in your response because our telephone connection is rather poor: The Americans believe that the anti-Saddam revolts in Iraq will not result in his overthrow and that the only way he can be removed would be by physically eliminating him. Is this a project that would interest us?

[Netanyahu] I would not like to address hypothetical questions. We would be happy to see Saddam Husayn disappear. The way to attain that goal is not necessarily in our hands.

[Friedman] Deputy Foreign Minister Binyamin Netanyahu, thank you very much and mazel tov.

[Netanyahu] Thank you.

Shoval: Baker Not Carrying 'Consolidated' Plan

TA0603162291 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1500 GMT 6 Mar 91

[Text] U.S. Secretary of State James Baker is not carrying a consolidated political plan. So says Zalman Shoval, Israel's ambassador to the United States, who arrived in Israel this afternoon. Shoval is to participate in the Inner Cabinet meeting in a short while. He said that the U.S. pressure for an accelerated political process will now be redirected from us to the Arab countries. Our correspondent Yaron Ben-'Ami reports from Ben-Gurion Airport:

[Begin recording] [Ben-'Ami] U.S. Secretary of State James Baker is coming here neither to pressure others nor be pressured by them, Zalman Shoval, Israel's ambassador to the United States, said today upon his arrival in Israel to participate in, among other things, the Inner Cabinet meeting this evening. Baker is coming to gain impressions and hear about proposals. Pressure will now be applied to the Arab countries that participated in the anti-Iraq coalition.

Regarding the situation at the State Department, Shoval said: They do not have a consolidated political plan for peace in the Middle East.

[Shoval] The situation at the State Department is that they have no finalized plan; they are ready to hear ideas. They are coming here to study things. They want to see a Middle East that has not reverted to its prewar situation, in terms of relations between the Arab countries and Israel. They are also interested in learning about our economic problems and are prepared to extend aid to us—naturally not without some argument or deliberation. I got something done, almost at the airport: As you know, a positive and important resolution [on aid] was reached only yesterday. I think that can be regarded as an expression of willingness to continue the good coordination that exists between the two countries.

[Ben-'Ami] As for the aid he secured at the last minute, Shoval said that it consists of more than only military aid.

[Shoval] This will no doubt be reported officially, but there is a package involving emergency military aid to the tune of $650 million. There are also other components. [end recording]

Arab Source: Baker To Present Syrian Peace Plan

TA0703095291 Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT in Hebrew 7 Mar 91 pp 1, 13

[Report from Washington by Rami Tal]

[Text] "Secretary of State James Baker will notify Israel that Syria is willing to sign a peace agreement with it and even establish diplomatic relations, provided it assumes sovereignty over the Golan Heights." This is what a senior Arab diplomatic source told YEDI'OT AHARONOT in Washington yesterday.

According to the source, the Syrians contacted the United States and Egypt over the past few days and asked that Baker relay this message to Israel and examine its response. The source added that one of the reasons Baker will visit Jerusalem before Damascus is his wish to bring to Syria the Israeli Government reply to its offer.

The Arab source said that the Syrian proposition includes the following clauses:

—Syria will obtain a secret Israeli promise that the Golan Heights in its entirety will be handed over to Syrian sovereignty. The United States will be involved in this move and will provide Syria with guarantees that Israel will keep its promise. "We cannot begin contacts with Israel before we are given this promise," the Syrians have told the United States. According to the source, they reminded the United States that President al-Sadat came to Jerusalem only after he was promised that all of the Sinai would be returned to Egypt.

—The United States and the USSR will organize the announcement of an "international opening" declared to deal with all the issues related to the Arab-Israeli conflict. Such an "opening" will serve as an "umbrella" for the Syrians to prove that they are not neglecting the Palestinian issue in an attempt to regain the Golan. The "opening" will be attended by the two superpowers, Israel, Egypt, and a non-PLO Palestinian delegation. In their messages to the United States, the Syrians stressed that they do not want the PLO to participate in the move.

—After the international opening, Syria will be willing to enter direct bilateral negotiations with Israel concerning the arrangements for the withdrawal from and security on the Golan. The Syrians are willing to accept complete demilitarization of the Golan Heights and the presence of an international force there.

—At the conclusion of the negotiations, and in parallel with the Israeli withdrawal, Syria will be willing to sign a peace accord with Israel. Syria will be willing to establish diplomatic relations with Israel upon its completion of the withdrawal from the Golan Heights. The Syrians insist on this order of events, because this was the progression used in the development of Israeli-Egyptian relations.

The Arab diplomatic source in Washington said that the United States will make every effort to promote the Syrian initiative. According to him, the Americans believe that it will be easier to persuade Israel to give up the Golan Heights than to withdraw from the West Bank, because of the following reasons: The number of Israeli settlers on the Golan Heights is lower than that in the West Bank; the Golan does not bear the same historical and emotional associations that apply to Judaea and

Samaria. According to this source, a senior White House official has said: "The Golan Heights are nothing but real estate [preceding two words in English]. They can be negotiated rationally."

Sharon Demands Likud Meeting Before Baker Visit

TA0703110791 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1000 GMT 7 Mar 91

[Text] Minister Ari'el Sharon demands that the Likud Central Committee be convened and political resolutions made before the arrival of Secretary of State Baker; he intends to take this up with the prime minister.

During a tour of Ramla, Minister Sharon said he does not believe the Likud would be ready to negotiate on the Golan Heights or Jerusalem. If the government wishes to discuss these issues, it should first ask for the Knesset's permission to do that. The minister's remarks were reported by our correspondent Shmu'el Tal.

Session 'Technically Impossible'

TA0703112691 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1100 GMT 7 Mar 91

[Text] The prime minister's aides have said that Yitzhaq Shamir will consider the idea of holding a political debate at the Likud Central Committee only after he receives a formal proposal to do so. So far, no meeting has been set between Mr. Shamir and Minister Sharon, the Likud Central Committee chairman, who is requesting that the Central Committee be convened.

Our party affairs correspondent Shlomo Raz reports that, in the opinion of Shamir's aides, it will be technically impossible to convene the Central Committee before U.S. Secretary of State James Baker's arrival in Israel next week.

Shamir Meets Inner Cabinet, Reaffirms 1989 Plan

TA0603202991 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 2000 GMT 6 Mar 91

[Text] Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir said this evening that the Israeli Government's initiative from 14 May 1989 will constitute the framework for the discussions to be held with U.S. Secretary of State James Baker. He said that if there are any ministers who disagree with the initiative, they will be permitted to express their opinions, but he added that the initiative itself is not up for debate.

Our political correspondent Arye Golan reports that Shamir made these statements at this evening's Inner Cabinet session. Nevertheless, Shamir proposed adding a demand to the peace initiative calling for limiting the arms race.

Agriculture Minister Refa'el Eytan, who was the first speaker at the meeting, demanded a new discussion of the peace initiative, claiming that conditions have changed in the aftermath of the Gulf war. He did not express his support for the initiative as endorsed in 1989.

Defense Minister Moshe Arens said he supported the initiative even though he would preferred holding municipal elections in the territories. Arens, however, said that there could be no backing away from a decision already adopted by the government.

The Inner Cabinet did not conclude its debate this evening and will reconvene after next Sunday's Cabinet session.

Ministers, Press React to 6 Mar Bush Address

Levi Sees 'Nothing New'

TA0703070391 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 0610 GMT 7 Mar 91

[Telephone interview with Foreign Minister David Levi by anchorman Shalom Qital and political correspondent Arye Golan—live]

[Text] [Qital] Good morning, Foreign Minister David Levi.

[Levi] Good morning.

[Qital] Arye Golan is also in the studio, and we would like to discuss two things with you, which are really one: Baker's upcoming visit and George Bush's speech last night. Having heard Bush, we already know what Baker is bringing: the formula of territories in exchange for peace.

[Levi] First of all, veteran reporters like yourself and political correspondent Arye Golan must realize that the statement contains nothing new. This is not the first time these things have been said or written; they were the basis of past UN resolutions.

[Golan] Perhaps the moment of truth, which has been anticipated since 1967, has arrived, following the United States' glorious victory in the Gulf? Perhaps now, administration people—Bush, Baker, and others—feel that this is the moment when they can pressure Israel to cede the territories? This is the moment about which the prime minister, too, has been speaking recently.

[Levi] Why use terms such as pressuring Israel to get it to cede the territories? You might as well have said pressure Israel and kill it. Sometimes you people say things that are not very pleasant to the ear. I am referring to assumptions and evaluations you make.

[Golan] It is an interpretation, Mr. Foreign Minister.

[Levi] Let us stop arguing. You and I are not conducting negotiations. You are not Bush, and you are certainly not the body with which we will have to negotiate. Everyone is talking about the need to generate an atmosphere of trust, of the past and present danger to Israel, and of the need to create an apparatus of mutual trust. What has the

Israeli Government said on its own initiative, as it did in Camp David? It said we must follow the path by which peace can be attained without preconditions and that we must explore the intentions of the other parties. This cannot be done in an instant; no button can be pressed to solve this problem. Therefore, I am very glad that Israel has reiterated its position and its initiative, stressing it again in the Cabinet meeting last night. There was an impression that Israel has retreated from its initiative, that it is saying no to everything. This is not true. Israel's desire for peace is evident in its peace initiative. By the way, no other party has launched a political initiative. It is Israel that is saying yes to peace.

[Qital] Yes, but the Israeli Government's political initiative does not mention territories for peace, while Bush is saying territories for peace.

[Levi] Bush is saying that, and not for the first time. The U.S. Administration has reiterated its interpretation of Resolution 242 more than once. We have an ongoing controversy on this issue, but what Israel is saying is: Give us the opportunity to discuss peace with our neighbors without preconditions.

[Golan] Mr. Foreign Minister, would you be ready to consider applying the territories-for-peace principle to any territory at all? To the Golan Heights, for instance?

[Levi] You are once again returning to the Golan Heights issue, and I will once again repeat what I have always said, and I am doing so because there are people here in Israel who claim I have said things which I never have: We want direct negotiations without preconditions with the Arab countries. I attribute great significance to an Arab leader's desire to talk to Israel, as this would signal to his nation that the way of peace is the right path. It would also mean that he would do everything possible not to fail in attaining peace, because otherwise his people would attack him for taking the wrong path. From Israel's viewpoint, a decision by al-Asad, for instance, to hold direct talks with us would mean a victory for the concept of peace. That man would be saying that having strived for years to reach strategic parity, having prepared for certain war with Israel, he has nevertheless decided to talk to us without preconditions, just as we wanted.

Therefore, why should I agree to the precondition of ceding the Golan Heights? God forbid that we should accept such a condition. On the other hand—and this is where reason comes in—it would be equally unreasonable for us to say that we will not talk to Syria until it announces that it is willing to forfeit the Golan Heights. When negotiations begin, we trust ourselves to defend our interests.

[Qital] I assume, Mr. Levi, that you probably want to talk to Syria, to al-Asad, before you talk to the Palestinians.

[Levi] No, I am not saying that. There have been so many reports about what was said that the most essential points, on the basis of which I acted within parameters set by the government, were forgotten. I made these points in my initial talks in Washington, later in the talks with the secretary of state in New York, and again in my recent talks with him. It is impossible for Israel to be struggling to solve the so-called Palestinian problem, while Arab countries remain at war with us. No way. This is illogical, and it does not signal any desire for peace on their part because, as already proven, the danger stems first and foremost from the Arab countries.

As I said, we must take concurrent action—that is, talk without preconditions and in accordance with Israel's peace initiative with the Arab countries and with the Arab population of Judaea, Samaria, and Gaza, if they concur with the outline of our initiative.

[Golan] Mr. Foreign Minister, acting on the pessimistic assumption that the United States is nevertheless liable to pressure us to make concessions, will you advise Prime Minister Shamir, the Likud leader, to announce elections before territorial concessions are discussed?

[Levi] First of all, I am not a pessimist; second, in the Likud, everything is subject to consultations; and the third and most important point: We will try to achieve coordination, understanding, and the promotion of peace with the United States. This is not an issue over which we will start fighting at this time, as if to say that if they want to pressure us, we must either don our helmets or take shelter in a bunker. No! The secretary of state will come and we will talk with him. There is understanding on a number of points, based on the Israeli initiative and on our desire for peace and for direct negotiations with the Arab countries. These points are acceptable to him, and he has already taken action in that direction. Therefore, I would advise us not to be beset by fears and apprehensions. I will repeat that, naturally, the U.S. Administration has joined neither the Zionist Movement nor the Likud. The United States has its own stands, and we have ours, and ours are designed to protect life. Our desire for peace should be made obvious and beyond any doubt. We will lead toward that goal and will be seen doing so.

[Qital] Thank you very much, Foreign Minister David Levi.

[Levi] All the best.

Address Called 'Political Tomahawk'

TA0703061291 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 0505 GMT 7 Mar 91

[Report by political correspondent Arye Golan]

[Text] As is usual in such events, official Jerusalem is not rushing to react to President Bush's speech; it is waiting for the full text. With its territories-for-peace slogan, however, the speech could be defined as a political Tomahawk launched at the Prime Minister's Office in Jerusalem. After this preparatory bombardment, we will presumably witness a ground offensive—that is, an

offensive aimed at the territories to be launched by Baker, who is due here on Monday. In any event, it is obvious that the territories-for-peace formula is totally unacceptable to the Shamir-led government.

As already mentioned, the prime minister is not rushing to comment. The Prime Minister's Office told me a short while ago: When we receive the full text of the speech, we will study it; when Secretary of State Baker comes to Jerusalem next Monday [11 March], all the points raised in the President's speech will be discussed with him.

It cannot be said that the prime minister was surprised by the speech. A few weeks ago, he spoke of strong pressures that would be exerted to obtain through political ways what Israel could not be made to cede through force. The moment when the government will be required to muster all the wisdom and sophistication mentioned by the prime minister in order not to give in and to hold on to Judaea, Samaria, and Gaza is at hand.

By the way, during last night's ministerial consultation, which took place before Bush's speech, Minister Arens spoke of the tragic mistake made when the Camp David accords were signed. In his opinion, these accords established the precedent of giving back all the territory in return for peace; now the world wants Israel to pursue the course set by that precedent.

The Shamir government, which includes the Likud, the National Religious Party, Tehiya, Tzomet, and Moledet, will evidently rear up and reject the territories-for-peace formula, even if this approach results in early elections. In any event, the Israeli Government is adhering to its May 1989 peace initiative. An announcement to this effect was made by the prime minister at the Inner Cabinet meeting last night.

We have the first reaction by one of the Cabinet ministers, Minister Yuval Ne'eman:

[Begin Ne'eman recording] It is regrettable that President Bush and his administration fail to understand the Middle East, even after erring so badly on the issue of Iraq. A mere month before the invasion of Kuwait, Iraq was still described to us as a moderate country, which is a bit like describing a bull in a china shop. I am convinced that when negotiations take place, Congress will show much more understanding and sympathy for our cause. We have been through a lot, and we will overcome this, too. [end recording]

Palestinians React Cautiously

TA0703063391 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 0505 GMT 7 Mar 91

[Text] The first reaction in the territories to President Bush's speech is skeptical and cautious. Palestinian sources said: The principles are not new; all that needs to be done is to implement them. Our correspondent Arye Gus reports:

The Palestinians did not expect President Bush's speech to reflect a far-reaching change, and they are not very disappointed. It is a good speech from the Palestinian viewpoint, says a Palestinian acquaintance from East Jerusalem, journalist Jonathan Kuttab. Although the speech supports the principle of territories for peace and recognizes the Palestinians' legitimate rights, proof is necessary. Resolutions 242 and 338 have been discussed for over 23 years; now action is required. If the United States devotes to the Palestinian cause at least 10 percent of the determination and seriousness it applied against Iraq, the Palestinians will be satisfied.

Another acquaintance says: We demand that Israel be forced to withdraw from the territories and that the legitimate Palestinian leadership—that is, the PLO—be recognized. When this is achieved, everything else will be open for discussion. The Palestinians have already declared their willingness to recognize Israel. The Palestinian support for Iraq is irrelevant; it stemmed from the Palestinians' direct interests.

What will the Palestinians do? During Secretary of State Baker's visit, Palestinian leaders will hold a news conference where they will explain their stands; however, they will express the essence of their stands in a meeting with the three EC foreign ministers to be held in Jerusalem today.

And another fact: On the eve of Baker's visit to the region, a general strike marking the outbreak of the intifadah is under way in the territories. This will be the national leadership's show of strength, perhaps its first opportunity to demonstrate since the beginning of the Gulf war.

Political Parties Respond

TA0703090291 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 0700 GMT 7 Mar 91

[Excerpts] President Bush's remarks last night about the territories-for-peace principle as the basis for an Israeli-Palestinian arrangement have elicited reactions from every part of the political spectrum in Israel. [passage omitted]

Minister Ari'el Sharon responded by saying that Israel must speak clearly and must initiate rather than wait, because if it does not, it will be preoccupied with providing answers to peace plans conceived by others. At this time, Israel must decide on the order of priorities for discussing peace and on the stage at which the Palestinian problem will be addressed.

Labor Party Chairman Shim'on Peres was not surprised by the U.S. President's statement. Territories for peace has always been Washington's position, which only comes to prove that the Palestinian issue is the one truly pressing problem.

Ya'ir Tzaban from MAPAM [United Workers Party] believes that after the Gulf war, a majority of Israelis will

support a peace plan that will rid us of the burden of ruling the Palestinians and that will guarantee stable security.

Ge'ula Kohen of Tehiya says: Bush's plan is fated to be buried in the political cemetery, as were its predecessors: the Rogers, Reagan, and Shultz plans. American pressure, warns Ge'ula Kohen, will result in early elections in Israel, and new elections will result in an even more nationalistic government.

[Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew at 0800 GMT on 7 March adds the following reactions to President Bush's speech, as reported by Ze'ev Kohen: The Citizens Rights Movement "welcomes Bush's remarks, saying that if no change follows the Desert Storm, another stormy war will occur that will pose a direct threat to Israel. It is sad and frustrating to see the U.S. Administration, which is active, full of initiatives, and determined, pitched against the paralyzed, scared, and rejectionist Israeli Government, as if it were the United States and not Israel that needed peace to survive.

["The Shinuy Party says: The Gulf war events have shown that territories could not prevent missiles from falling on the civilian population. The Greater Israel policy should be traded in for arrangements that will guarantee security and save us from the need to govern 2 million Arabs. Israel can and has a right to ask the United States for military guarantees covering the eventuality of a future attack."]

Ne'eman: Speech Will Unite Government

TA0703084691 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 0600 GMT 7 Mar 91

[Telephone interview with Yuval Ne'eman, minister of energy and infrastructure, science and technology, by Ya'el Dan—live]

[Text] [Dan] Last night President Bush declared: territorics for peace. Is this the beginning of the pressure campaign?

[Ne'eman] Indeed, the picture now is grimmer, because it is my impression that the United States does not yet understand the Middle East. One should remember that former President Carter advised the Shah of Iran not to activate his forces when the revolt started there and to try to reach some kind of compromise. We know how that story ended. One should remember that the United States supported Iraq, believing that it had found some new moderate element in the Middle East, and took part in arming it. In fact, it was the United States that handed Iraq its success against Iran. It has now paid for that mistake. Syrian President al-Asad, for example, whose army is in fact occupying Lebanon, took east Beirut before America's very eyes only four months ago and killed POW's . Suddenly none of this is important, and Eretz Yisra'el is perceived as the main problem in our region.

[Dan] Minister Ne'eman, it goes without saying that you do not find the formula of territories for peace acceptable. Furthermore, you do not accept the May 1989 government plan. What do you have to offer the Americans?

[Ne'eman] First, I would like to say that President Bush's address will help bringing the members of the government closer together and will consolidate a firmer government stand. This is because the stands will get even more exposure, and this government as a whole is against territories for peace. Therefore, I believe that those who thought that the decisions of 14 May 1989 would yield some kind of compromise are seeing a much clearer picture today.

[Dan] You speak of the clearer picture and the lessons the Americans must learn. What should our lessons be?

[Ne'eman] Our lesson is that we must primarily care for our own security and continue implementing Zionism.

[Dan] What do you mean by our security? Does the fact that Iraqi missiles got here not shake the claim that we need borders that will defend our security?

[Ne'eman] I do not think so, because while we cannot say that no one was killed by the missiles—one man was—nobody conquers a country with missiles. Ask the Kuwaitis. They will tell you just how important territories are. The fact that it had a border with Iraq with no strategic depth led to the occupation of Kuwait. We cannot afford to find ourselves in a situation where the United States will come to liberate us six months after we are conquered by our Arab neighbors. There is a difference here which cannot be perceived when viewed from Washington. For us, it is very clear.

You asked about alternative solutions. I would say that today there is a good chance to reach negotiations and bring stands closer together, for example, between Israel and Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states. I known this even from the Sau[illegible]s. On the other hand, today our arguments will be with the United States. If the United States does not pressure the Saudis and give their king at least some kind of clear signal, saying: We are asking you to honestly do something for the good of the matter and to sacrifice in order to end the dispute—if the United States does not do this, clearly the Saudis will do nothing.

[Dan] Do you know from the Saudis that they are willing to set aside their expectations or demands on the Palestinian issue?

[Ne'eman] I can say I know they are willing. I spoke to Saudis and got a feel for the mood there. I know that if indeed the political ship is directed there, and if the United States uses the incredible influence it now has—because it saved Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and the Gulf countries from Iraqi occupation—and applies pressure there, there is a good chance of attaining something. If it makes do with pressuring us, as I said this morning, we shall overcome that, as well.

[Dan] Thank you, Minister Ne'eman.

Shilansky: Settlers Are Answer

TA0703121991 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1100 GMT 7 Mar 91

[Report by Udi Segal]

[Text] The answer to George Bush's speech are those living here in Hebron and Qiryat Arba,' who travel these roads everyday risking their lives, Knesset Speaker Dov Shilansky said. By their settlement here, they are expressing their faith in and devotion to Eretz Yisra'el. Shilansky toured the Jewish settlement in Hebron today and referred to the speech made by U.S. President George Bush.

[Begin Shilansky recording] The United States is a friendly country. We have disagreements with it, but our fate here will be determined by us alone. Others will not determine it for us. [end recording]

After meeting with settlement leaders in Hebron and with the head of the Qiryat Arba' Council, Shilansky also met with Arab residents of the area. He praised the Jewish settlers' perseverance in the face of violence and pressures. Even the demands Baker has made on the eve of his visit here are not new and do not express a new bent, he said.

[Begin Shilansky recording] This did not start today. The pressure did not start today. I trust and believe in the Israeli Government and Knesset to provide the right answer. [end recording]

Shilansky presented a document from 1980, signed by David Levi, which states that he supports the development of the Jewish settlements.

EC Troika Arrives for Talks in Jerusalem

TA0703090691 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 0830 GMT 7 Mar 91

[Text] The EC foreign ministers troika landed in Israel a short while ago. They arrived some two hours late, and therefore all their meetings in Jerusalem will be delayed. The troika will meet with Foreign Minister Levi, Defense Minister Arens, and Prime Minister Shamir. The three have a meeting slated with a group of Palestinian notables in East Jerusalem later today.

Urges 'Bold' Initiative

TA0703123191 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1200 GMT 7 Mar 91

[Text] The EC is calling on Israel to come out with a bold peace initiative, without a third element pushing it to do so. Referring to the issue of the Palestinian representation, the foreign minister of Luxembourg, who is a member of the troika currently visiting Israel, said that the Palestinians alone must decide who will represent them. He was answering a question on whether the PLO is their representative.

The foreign ministers of the Netherlands, Luxembourg, and Italy arrived in Jerusalem today and held a news conference. Prior to that, while in Damascus, they were told by the participants in the conference of Arab countries who are members of the Gulf coalition that now that a just war has ended, they believe the time has come for a just peace in the Middle East, based on the UN resolutions. The EC believes the same, the visiting foreign ministers said at a joint news conference held in Jerusalem with Foreign Minister David Levi, after a working session with him.

'Hundreds' of Housing Units Built in W. Bank

TA0603181491 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1500 GMT 6 Mar 91

[Excerpts] Construction work on hundreds of housing units in the territories is continuing. In Efrat, for example, approximately 900 units are planned for this year. The Construction and Housing Ministry is not denying that work is under way in the territories, but it has refused to provide exact data. Our correspondent Udi Segal toured the territories today and filed this report:

Sharon's Black Book is how Knesset Members Eli Ben-Menahem [Alignment] and Charlie Biton [Black Panthers] yesterday dubbed the Construction and Housing Ministry's building plans for the territories. The Ministry said that the figure they cited of 24,000 housing units is totally groundless, and yet it did not deny the fact that work is under way in Judaea and Samaria. Ministry officials claim that the units are planned for residents of long standing and follows the cabinet's policy.

In fact, an accelerated development process for the Jewish population in the territories is involved. Nearly all the settlements in the territories have been engulfed in this momentum for some months now. At least several dozen apartments have been built in every Judaea and Samaria settlement, so that dozens of new quarters have been established.

This development process has also been called the fleshing out of existing settlements. [passage omitted]

The Construction Ministry has explained that new immigrants are not being deliberately directed to the territories. Still, there are groups of new immigrants, particularly from the Soviet Union, in each Samaria settlement. The settlers are making no secret of the building momentum; on the contrary, they are proud of it and are interested in expanding it more. [passage omitted]

The head of the Efrat council says by the end of the year another 5,000 units will be built, in addition to those that are currently under construction. Deputy Construction

and Housing Minister Avraham Ravitz told the Knesset this morning that approximately 2,000 housing units were built in the territories in 1990. The Ministry refused to divulge any more information about plans for the future.

Arens Comments on Ability To Launch Spy Satellite

TA0603115691 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1130 GMT 6 Mar 91

[Report from the Knesset by Dov Gilhar]

[Text] Speaking at the Knesset today, Defense Minister Moshe Arens addressed himself to the long-debated issue of whether Israeli Intelligence knew or did not know about Iraq's military capability. Arens surprisingly revealed details about Israel's satellite ability, and we will try to be precise. He said: We have already launched two satellites into space, and let no one be surprised if—with no connection to the war—we launch a satellite with intelligence capability.

I believe this is the first public remark by Defense Minister Arens about Israel's ability to launch intelligence or spy satellites into space.

A little earlier, Arens came out in defense of the intelligence community and denied that he had attacked it in his address to the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee. He said that when he went to Washington two weeks before the Gulf crisis broke out, he took the heads of the Intelligence Branch and the Mosad with him. The discussions there with Secretary of Defense Cheney focused mainly on the Iraqi issue. Some of the intelligence reports the Israelis brought with them were previously unknown to the United States. Arens said: Our intelligence elements did a very good job during this crisis, within the framework of the means they had at their disposal.

'Senior' Army Source Notes Problems

TA0703103691 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1000 GMT 7 Mar 91

[Text] A senior Army source has said that, even if Israel obtains an espionage satellite in the future, the solution will only be partial, because the operation of such satellites requires an infrastructure. The instruments with which the satellite is equipped and the satellite's weight are very important. In addition, satellites are problematic in that they wear out very quickly. Another difficulty is the need to maneuver the satellite and to change its route from time to time.

At the same time, such a satellite would solve other problems existing today, when intelligence is being amassed by aircraft. Now the alien countries' airspace limits the possibilities. These observations were made to our correspondent Karmela Menashe.

Army Sources Comment on Syrian Missile Purchases

TA0703091691 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 0900 GMT 7 Mar 91

[Text] Reacting to reports about the arrival of upgraded North Korean missiles in Syria, military sources said that the Syrians are trying to obtain a missile that will have greater precision than the Scud in the 500-km range, as well as a mobile launcher, in order to be able to launch missiles from deep within Syrian territory or, alternatively, to hit southern Israel.

Our army affairs correspondent Karmela Menashe reports that in the past, the Syrians tried to obtain SS-23 missiles from the Soviet Union and, having failed, turned to East Asia.

Police Using IDF Methods in Territories

TA0403144091 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1200 GMT 4 Mar 91

[Text] The police minister has stated that several steps have already been taken toward enhancing the security in the Old City of Jerusalem in the wake of yeshiva student Elhanan Atali's murder, including methods employed by the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] in the territories and adopted by the police.

Our correspondent Moshe Nussbaum reports that in today's Knesset Internal Affairs Committee meeting, a discussion was held on the security situation in the capital. Jerusalem District Police Commander Hayim Albaldes said that over 130 suspected rioters have been detained recently. It was found, however, that curfews on the Old City are an ineffective measure.

Yehoshu'a Matza, the committee chairman, demanded that the police locate the thousands of Arabs who live in East Jerusalem, although they are not residents of that city, and expel them to the territories.

The discussion was also attended by a representative of the yeshiva in which Elhanan Atali was a student.

One Killed in Clash With IDF; General Strike

TA0603125291 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1100 GMT 6 Mar 91

[Report by Udi Segal]

[Excerpts] The anniversary of the intifadah, according to the Islamic Jihad, is being marked by a general strike in the territories today. The strike is not being fully observed, and many laborers left for work in Israel. A total of approximately 22,000 laborers left for work, of which 16,000 were from Judaea and Samaria. [passage omitted]

A resident of the village of Bayt Rima in the Ramallah area was killed this morning in a clash with IDF [Israel Defense Forces] soldiers. Residents of the village threw stones at an IDF unit operating in the village. The

soldiers called on the stone throwers to halt and fired a few shots in the air. When they failed to halt, the soldiers fired at the stone throwers. One of them was severely injured. A helicopter was dispatched to the village to take the man to the hospital, but he died before the helicopter arrived.

SLA Kills 'Terrorists' in Security Strip 6 Mar

TA0603174691 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1700 GMT 6 Mar 91

[Text] Five terrorists were killed this afternoon in a clash with an SLA [South Lebanese Army] unit in the security strip in southern Lebanon. The SLA suffered no casualties. Our correspondent in the north Menahem Horowitz reports that the clash occurred north of Shihin and that the terrorists were apparently on their way to carry out an attack along the Israeli border.

Arab Leadership Warned Against Land Day Riots

TA0703100591 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 0600 GMT 6 Mar 91

[Report by police affairs correspondent 'Ido Baum]

[Text] The Gulf war and the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] policy in the territories stopped the intifadah from crossing the Green Line, top police brass have said. As soon as the war ended, signs of initial attempts to renew this activity—such as the murder of the Jerusalem yeshiva student, damages to farms in the Sharon area, and other incidents—began to appear.

Chief of Police Commissioner Ya'aqov Terner is making it clear that the police will act with determination to maintain the situation within the Green Line.

[Begin Terner recording] We will not allow a return of the intifadah in its old form—neither in Jerusalem nor in other places, but mainly in Jerusalem. That is why we will not allow a repeat of things we seem to have grown accustomed to on Land Day. [end recording]

To meet this end, the police have deployed a reinforced defense formation, based on an extension of the IDF activity in the territories. The police will set up roadblocks to search residents of the territories who come to work in Israel and will enforce the ban against overnight stays. The real test of the police will be at the end of March, on Land Day. The police are preparing for it with reinforced units, as usual, with the hope they will not be needed. The chief of police met with the Arab leadership to make it clear to them that the police will not hesitate this time to quell any attempt to riot.

[Begin Terner recording] It could end a lot worse than we would like. I simply suggest that for their own good, they find a different way to pass the day. [end recording]

Foreign Minister Comments on Iran's Regional Role

LD0503200991 Tehran IRNA in English 1530 GMT 5 Mar 91

[Text] Amman, March 5, IRNA—The Islamic Republic of Iran and Jordan could play a vital role in the confidence-building process and in rebuilding relations in the region among the Muslim Arab countries in the aftermath of the Persian Gulf war.

"We are already doing this. Iran being a regional power, a Muslim country, stationed in the (Persian) Gulf can play this role," Jordan's Foreign Minister Tahir al-Masri told the Islamic Republic News Agency (IRNA) in an interview today.

"Iran can do a lot. It has now good ties with almost all Arab countries. It can be a source of stability in the region," he said.

The minister noted that both Jordan and Iran are bordering Iraq and that there were foreign troops in the Persian Gulf region where they could pose a threat to Iran, while Jordan could be threatened by another enemy, Israel.

"Both are facing foreign existence that we should resist. Iran and Jordan cannot resist this alone. We need to do that within the regional context."

Jordan and the area were passing through a very crucial and delicate period, and being situated right in the middle, "gives us an important role to play in the future as we have played in the past," al-Masri said in connection with Jordan's role.

The minister hoped that "we will leave behind us all the mistakes of the past and go quickly to solving our economic and political problems."

"We have certainly to start rebuilding relations, but we have to be careful in doing that. We don't want any more disappointments," al-Masri stressed.

Referring to the concept of a new security system for the region, al-Masri said it would be useless to talk about any security order without solving the Palestinian problem.

"It is very essential that we start solving this problem. (The Palestine issue) is the crux of instability in this area." The minister said that the U.N. Security resolutions "should be applied with the same determination as applied to Kuwait."

Asked if Jordan would accept the involvement of Israel in any security order, al-Masri replied, "When we talk about that we are talking about having peace with Israel. I know that the Iranian position here is different, but we are abiding by international legitimacy and with Arab resolutions."

The minister said the Arab summit at Fes had designated a plan "where we have to talk about peace with Israel."

Al-Masri, however, stressed that one does not know exactly if the Zionist state would be included in the security order.

"We don't know how we are going to deal with that in the future, because if for example Turkey is included, then Israel would be included," he told IRNA.

He said the U.S. and the Europeans were keen in the inclusion of Israel in a new security arrangement for the region.

Turning to relations with the United States, al-Masri said political differences existed between Amman and Washington.

"We had and have political differences with the U.S. the relations between Jordan and the U.S. is not on a positive base, but we recognize that relations should improve in the future."

He said it would be a great help if Washington, which has expressed disappointment with Jordan's stance during the Persian Gulf crisis, would understand Jordan's position and take efforts to solve the Palestinian question.

Al-Masri, however, said contacts between the Jordanian and American Government were continuing.

Al-Masri predicted a difficult period for the region in the future. But he underlined that the "wounds are between the Arab leaders and governments."

"The Arab states were to some extent unified in their approach and understanding to the crisis. There was better understanding on part of the Arab people on the causes of the crisis rather than by the governments," he said.

The minister called for the healing in inter-Arab ties to take place as "swiftly as possible, but probably on a new and different basis."

He called for a review of the Arab League and its role.

"The Arab League is paralysed not to use the word dead.

In order to avoid the bitter experiences of the past between the Arab and Muslim countries, he said the states in the region must work together and "realise that violence will not be useful any more and we have to respect each other's independence and integrity."

The Islamic cooperation, he stressed, should be based on wider principles rather than just on economic cooperation.

"One can talk about political cooperation with Muslim countries on a broader scale, but economic cooperation should be concentrated among the countries of the region that include Iran and Turkey," the minister said.

Cited on Better Ties With Turkey

TA0603121991 Ankara Domestic Service in Turkish 1100 GMT 6 Mar 91

[Text] Tahir al-Masri, the Jordanian minister of foreign affairs, has declared that Jordan wants to establish better relations with Turkey. He was replying to questions by Turkish Radio and Television correspondent Selma Kurtcebe. Al-Masri noted that in addition to their geographical proximity, Turkey and Jordan share a common history, as well as common interests. Kurtcebe reports from Amman:

Tahir al-Masri said that certain differences in political views should not affect bilateral relations, adding that Turkey can play very important roles in the Middle East. Noting that he does not believe that Jordan will be isolated politically because of its pro-Iraqi attitude during the Gulf crisis, al-Masri stressed that Jordan will develop its relations with the Arab countries and with the West.

The Jordanian foreign affairs minister reiterated that if there is to be stability in the Middle East in the future, the Palestinian question must be resolved first. He added that the promotion of economic, political, and commercial relations among regional countries and an emphasis on development will contribute positively to creating stability in the region.

Stresses PLO Part of Peace Efforts

NC0703013791 Amman SAWT AL-SHA'B in Arabic 6 Mar 91 pp 1, 13

[By Faysal al-Shubul]

[Text] Amman—Jordan has welcomed the active international diplomatic moves to find a solution to the Palestine question.

In a statement to SAWT AL-SHA'B, Foreign Minister Tahir al-Masri said that despite our awareness of the nature of these moves, any solution to the Palestine question must, in our view, depend on two basic elements:

First, applying international legitimacy to the Palestine question, just as it was applied to Kuwait.

Second, PLO participation as a party representing the Palestinian people.

Al-Masri also expressed confidence that despite differences, this position is also taken by the other Arab parties.

Asked about Israel's moves and its attempt to hamper any solution to the Palestine question and to market the so-called Israeli initiative put forth in 1989, al-Masri said that Israel made a move before the Gulf crisis and announced a plan, but it was not accepted by the West and I do not think that it will be accepted.

Concluding his statement, al-Masri said that despite all this, we do not have enough information about the current moves, and there are no major contacts between us and the United States in this regard.

King Receives Telephone Call From Mitterrand

NC0603170091 Amman Domestic Service in Arabic 1200 GMT 6 Mar 91

[Text] His Majesty King Husayn received a telephone call from French President Francois Mitterrand today in which he expressed his deep pride in his personal friendship with his majesty and the friendship between the Jordanian and French peoples, which has never been shaken.

President Mitterrand also praised his majesty's wise leadership and stressed France's support for Jordan and its appreciation for its balanced stands and his majesty's continuous efforts to achieve peace and stability in the Middle East. He also expressed France's desire to continue and to reactivate contacts between the leaders in both countries.

Speaker Requests Extension of Parliament Session

NC0703012491 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 6 Mar 91 p 1

[Text] Amman—AL-RA'Y has learned that House of Representatives Speaker Dr. 'Abd-al-Latif 'Arabiyat has asked Prime Minister Mudar Badran to issue a royal decree from His Majesty King Husayn extending by two months the parliament's current second ordinary session in accordance with the Constitution, bearing in mind that the current parliamentary session will end on the eve of 16 March.

This request is made in order to allow parliament to accomplish its remaining tasks, and to continue discussions on developments in the Gulf and their impact on other regional issues.

Paragraph 3 of Article 78 of the constitution stipulates that the ordinary session of the parliament begins on the date the parliament is called to convene and extends for four months, unless the king dissolves the House of Representatives during the four-month period. The king has the right to extend the ordinary session for a period not exceeding three months in order for it to accomplish its tasks. At the end of the four months or of any extension, the king terminates the parliamentary session.

Al-Tahrir Party Statement Condemns U.S. Policy

NC0603134391 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 6 Mar 91 p 4

[Text] Amman—The Al-Tahrir party has issued a statement condemning the U.S. political movements represented in U.S. Secretary of State Baker's upcoming visit

to the region that aims at finalizing and implementing the new world order for comprehensive hegemony on our Arab region.

The statement pointed out that the United States is exploiting its power over the Security Council to impose its hegemony and control over the Gulf and its wealth. It also seeks to eliminate the Palestine issue, intensify Arab fragmentation, and prevent the emergence of an effective Arab power.

Workers Suspended for Political Reasons Reinstated

NC0603135591 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 6 Mar 91 p 1

[Text] Amman—AL-RA'Y has learned that in its session last Saturday chaired by Prime Minister Mudar Badran, the Cabinet adopted a decision to reinstate all employees suspended from their jobs for political reasons and were not allowed to be employed.

The AL-RA'Y correspondent has learned that a list of those affected by this decision will be sent from the Prime Ministry on Wednesday [6 March] or tomorrow, Thursday, to the Civil Service Commission in order to employ them at the ministries and public institutions on a temporary basis, until a list of government posts for 1991 is approved.

UN's Aime Arrives 5 Mar, Meets Al-Masri

NC0603164091 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 6 Mar 91 p 3

[Text] Amman (J.T.)-An assistant to U.N. Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar arrived here Tuesday [5 March] in the course of a tour in a number of Middle Eastern countries to discuss the Palestine and Lebanese questions.

Jean-Claude Aime will be exploring the prospect of reviving the peace process for the Arab-Israeli conflict, according to the Jordan News Agency, PETRA.

Aime's visit precedes by one day the arrival in Amman of Canada's Foreign Minister Joe Clark who is arriving Wednesday on a two-day visit during which he will meet His Majesty King Husayn and senior Jordanian government officials, including Foreign Minister Tahir al-Masri.

A Foreign Ministry official Tuesday welcomed Clark's visit to Jordan and noted that the talks would essentially cover Canadian-Jordanian ties and relatons among the countries of the Middle East.

He said that the visit offered a good opportunity for Clark to examine the situation in Jordan. "Canada has recently expressed understanding of the Jordanian position in the aftermath of the Gulf war and offered assistance to the country when it was grappling with the evacuees problem," the official said.

The official said that the talks would also focus on the post-war era as the two sides will exchange views about means of reconstructing the devastated areas.

On Thursday [7 March], Luxembourg Foreign Minister Jacques Poos and a representative of the European Community will come to Amman on a visit to discuss the situation in the wake of the Gulf war.

According to PETRA, the Foreign Ministry was now holding contacts with the European Community in Brussels to agree on an agenda for the talks.

Poos will also be touring other Arab countries and Israel for discussions on the Middle East question and the post-war situation in the region, PETRA added.

The visits coincide with the Middle East tour by U.S. Secretary of State James Baker who will be going to Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Syria and Israel starting on Wednesday.

[Amman Domestic Service in Arabic at 1200 GMT on 6 March adds, "Today in his office Foreign Minister Tahir al-Masri received Jean-Claude Aime, the envoy of the UN secretary general, who is currently on a visit to Jordan within the framework of a tour of the region.

["Al-Masri and Aime reviewed the situation in the region, particularly the developments in the occupied Arab territories and the Palestinian people's suffering at this stage.

["The Foreign Ministry secretary general attended the meeting."]

Canada's Clark Arrives for Talks on Region

NC0603213791 Amman Domestic Service in Arabic 1900 GMT 6 Mar 91

[Text] Joseph Clark, Canadian secretary of state for external affairs, arrived in Amman this evening on a two-day visit to Jordan during which he will hold talks with senior Jordanian officials on the current situation in the region. In a statement to the press upon arrival, Clark said that the aim of his visit is to continue the talks held by the Canadian prime minister in early February on post-war plans. He indicated that he is very interested in exploring and discussing the views of the Jordanian officials on these matters.

Responding to a question on the United Nations' role in pressuring Israel to implement the UN resolutions on the Palestine question, Clark said that in the past, the United Nations managed to play a major and effective role in the Kuwaiti issue and that it is necessary that it show similar interest in the Palestine question in order to achieve progress with the Palestinian people's legitimate rights. He noted that such questions need time to be solved and developed and that effects cannot be noticed overnight.

On the possibility of the United Nations' imposing sanctions or an economic embargo on Israel as it did on Iraq, he said that he does not believe this will be done. He said everyone has come to the conclusion that the UN resolutions are effective and can be implemented in other cases, as was the case regarding Iraq, especially concerning the Palestinian people's legitimate interests. He noted that this subject has been discussed, especially regarding the best means to implement UN Security Council Resolution 242.

Clark stressed the role of the PLO, given that it is the sole, legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, to reach a settlement of the Palestine question. He expressed concern about the recent statements which cast doubts on the PLO's role and representation of the Palestinian people. He added that for peace to be achieved between Iraq and Kuwait, observation forces could possibly dispatched to the region or semipermanent forces from regional states deployed. He stressed the need for an Arab presence and for devising a peacekeeping mechanism in which Canadian forces would take part.

He was welcomed upon arrival at the airport by the foreign minister, a number of senior Foreign Ministry officials, and the Canadian ambassador in Amman.

Meets King Husayn

NC0603231491 Amman Domestic Service in Arabic 2200 GMT 6 Mar 91

[Text] His Majesty King Husayn received Joseph Clark, Canadian secretary of state for external affairs, at al-Nadwah Palace this evening. His Highness Crown Prince Hasan also attended.

During the meeting they reviewed developments in the Middle East situation. Emphasis was placed on the Palestine question, and views were exchanged on the resumption of peace efforts to achieve regional stability. They also reviewed the growing bilateral relations between Jordan and Canada. Minister Clark praised the existing relations between the two friendly countries. His Majesty King Husayn paid tribute to Canada's support for Jordan. The meeting was attended by the Canadian ambassador in Amman.

UNICEF Warns of Epidemics in Iraq

JN0703093091 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 7 Mar 91 p 1

[By Maryam M. Shahin "with agency dispatches"]

[Text] Amman—Catastrophic epidemics of cholera, typhoid and meningitis could kill more people in Iraq than the war itself did if basic food supplies, medicines as well as electricity and clean water are not made available to Iraqi people before the weather warms up in the coming weeks, a U.N. agency official said Wednesday.

"The number of deaths that could result from any of these epidemics could greatly outnumber total battle deaths and civilian casualties—we are talking about tens of thousands," Richard Reid, regional director of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), said.

Speaking to reporters, Mr. Reid said that in light of the continued economic blockade of Iraq and the lack of electricity coupled with the inevitable breakdown of adequate medical infrastructure and services "Iraq is on the edge of what could be a catastrophe".

Water supply in Baghdad has been cut down to less than five per cent of original supply and there are no operational water and sewage treatment plants, according to a UNICEF-World Health Organisation (WHO) report made available to the press.

There appears to be unwillingness by the international community to maintain sanctions against Iraq, but intentions on their own offer little hope of alleviating the current situation. Asked if UNICEF was willing to make available to concerned NGOs [nongovernmental organizations] a list of medicines and medical equipment needed, Mr. Reid said the list has been given to the U.N. Security Council's sanctions committee.

UNICEF, as its name implies, relieves the suffering of children in particular and is planning to send badly needed vaccines to Iraq in the next few days.

The agency had sent 24 tonnes of basic medical and health supplies to Iraq via Iran in mid February.

Mr. Reid said that U.N. agencies would ask for a humanitarian ceasefire in southern Iraq, where hostilities took place in the past week, if necessary to take relief supplies. No such permits had been granted during allied attacks on Iraq during the 42-day war.

The UNICEF director said that he was receiving updates of the current situation in Iraq on a daily basis from two UNICEF officers now based in Baghdad. "Conditions have improved slightly but there is still a serious risk of outbreaks of typhoid, cholera and meningitis," he said.

The part of Iraq which was suffering the most severely from lack of food, medicines and water supplies was probably the southern Iraqi city of Basra, Mr. Reid added.

He said the closure of schools and cold weather have helped the epidemics from spreading so far. "When the hot weather begins, at the end of the month, the incubation of the diseases will speed up."

The partial breakdown of the medical system in Iraq was attributed by Mr. Reid, among other reasons, to the inability of medical staff to come to work due to lack of gasoline.

UNICEF had aked the U.N. sanctions committee to approve the shipment of diesel fuel and spare parts for generators to pump water and chlorine to purify it. Mr.

Reid said, indicating the total dependence of the U.N. agency on the political branch of its mother organisation.

Mr. Reid and the joint UNICEF-WHO report painted a picture of a city (Baghdad) thrown back in time.

He said people were riding horses through the streets of the capital because there was no petrol and stripping branches from trees in parks to use as firewood.

"Nothing works there, nothing. There's no water in the spigot, nothing happens when you flush the toilet, you can't use your refrigerator, you can't make the car run because there's no gas—nothing," he said.

Low cost rations of rice, flour, sugar, cooking oil and tea from the Iraqi government provided under half the daily required calories for even small children and had to be supplemeneted by increasingly expensive food from local markets.

The report said the price of meat had risen to $36 a kilo—about four days wages for an average urban worker.

Families had not been able to store perishable food because of lack of electricity and infants were being fed orange juice when milk is unavailable, the report said. It said many mothers were unable to breastfeed their children because of stress caused by five weeks of bombardment by the United States and its allies.

Sales of scarce bottled gas for cooking and heating set off near stampedes, it said.

The Iraqi government said this week it would increase rations of infant formula food.

Mr. Reid said Baghdad residents had seemed remarkably resilient through the allied attacks.

"While we were there there was intense bombing for three days—day and night," he said.

"We noticed that children were flying kites, groups of kids were playing football and people were out looking for food—it became clear that after the first few days of bombardment people got down to the business of coping."

Groups Aiding Iraq Merge; Ramadan Grateful

JN0703101391 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 7 Mar 91 p 3

["Special" to JORDAN TIMES by 'Awdah 'Awdah]

[Text] Amman—More than 400 groups and committees that have been active in Jordan raising donations and contributions for the Iraqi people have now merged to form the "Jordanian Coordination Committee for Supporting Iraq" (JCOSI) which will take charge of all programmes to collect financial and in-kind donations, according to an announcement here by Dr. 'Abdallah al-Khatib, president of the General Union of Voluntary Societies (GUVS).

"GUVS, along with the Arab Emergency Health Committee and Islamic groups, is included in the merger which will continue efforts, under a unified management, to raise funds and collect contributions to help the people of Iraq in the wake of the Gulf war," said Dr. Khatib at a press conference.

"The Iraqi leadership and people highly value the Jordanian stand, and a message sent to GUVS by the Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister Taha Yasin Ramadan voiced Iraq's gratitude to Jordan for helping the Iraqi people to cope with the difficult conditions resulting from the allied bombardment of Iraqi civilian targets," said Dr. al-Khatib.

Dr. al-Khatib called on all 400 groups to pursue their efforts, and said that the Iraqi Red Crescent Society and the Iraqi Save the Children Society were authorised to receive and distribute the contributions in Iraq.

He said that the newly-formed committee would initiate contacts with Arab and international organisations to explain the difficult conditions under which the Iraqi people are living as a result of the continued economic sanctions imposed by the U.N. Security Council.

Addressing the press conference, a representative of the Jordanian women groups said that women societies in Jordan had embarked on a campaign to collect some 5,000 tonnes of milk and other basic food supplies for the Iraqi children. Emily Naffa' said that so far 2,000 tonnes of milk had been collected, and the efforts would continue.

Dr. Fathi Abu-al-'Arja, who represented the Arab Emergency Health Committee formed by the Arab Doctors Union, told the meeting that collecting contributions was a national duty.

Other speakers called on the Jordanian people to contribute generously to this noble cause and to support the committee's activities.

The latest shipment of food and medical supplies to go to Iraq left Amman Tuesday.

Normal Travel Reported at Jordanian-Saudi Borders

NC0603135691 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 6 Mar 91 p 1

[Text] Amman—AL-DUSTUR has learned from informed sources that travel at al-Mudawwarah and al-'Umari border posts is normal. Jordanians with residence permits and entry visas are allowed to enter Saudi Arabia.

The paper also learned that a large number of Jordanian teachers crossed the border from Saudi Arabia to Jordan to spend the school vacation in Jordan.

Informed sources have said that travel at al-Ruwayshid border post is very slight, where only 200 Jordanians and Egyptians came from Iraq yesterday.

Editorial Advocates 'Popular Liberation War'

NC0703033391 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 6 Mar 91 pp 1, 14

[Editorial: "The United States and the Palestine Question!"]

[Text] Because the objective was to launch an annihilation war against the Iraqi people, destroy Iraq's military and economic powers and even its culture, Washington did not describe the Gulf crisis as a difficult one, or declare that negotiations and opinion surveys of the parties to it were needed in order to resolve it. Washington did not even embark on one step to indicate a political settlement to the crisis. Rather, Washington went further to block any Arab effort to contain the crisis, and obstructed and threatened any non-American attempt to prevent the annihilation war and thus prevent the accomplishment of the U.S.-Western-Zionist aims against the Iraqis and their nation, as well as against any Arab or Islamic awakening in the region.

Baker came to the region with statements that emphasized the United States' intention to stress to all coalition members that there is one party—other than Washington—with the right to reap its full share from the annihilation war against Iraq and its people. This party is the Zionist entity. As for the others, they have carried out their tasks and gotten their shares, and therefore must look after their affairs away from any attempts to harm the U.S.-Israeli strategic alliance. Baker's statements, other statements to follow, and his tour in the region, along with what it will lead to, will only confirm that the real objective behind the hostile war that still faces the Iraqi people is to provide new protection for the Israeli arrogance, Zionist war machinery, and the U.S.-Israeli rejection of all principles of international legitimacy and its resolutions related to the Palestinian Arab people.

The U.S. insistence on ignoring the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people, and on dealing with the Arab and Islamic nations with all this humiliation and disdain, can never establish true security and stability in the region. Perhaps U.S., Western, and Israeli policies have confronted the Arab millions with their only option; namely, to prepare and begin the comprehensive popular liberation war—a war which neither the current coalition nor any other possible alliance would be able to confront with aircraft, missiles, or the latest technological achievements. It is clear now that the United States and the Zionist enemy seek to make the Arab millions surrender at the expense of their pan-Arab affiliation, doctrine, and land.

Modern history is filled with what racism and the insistence on imposing humiliation can do to peoples, exploding their capabilities and intrinsic powers in a fierce, hard, and courageous manner. The annihilation war launched by Washington and its allies against the Iraqi people has confronted us with this truth; namely, that the war of the armed people is alone capable of establishing or even overcoming the required balance in confronting the U.S.-Western-Zionist military machinery.

The Middle East now seems like a powder keg of wrath and anger. It might only need one spark, by which our nation will begin its holy popular liberation war against its enemies—the enemies of its issues and the enemies of international legitimacy under whose U.S. sponsorship we are now being slaughtered and humiliated.

Editorial on Hope for 'Sincere' European Role

NC0603174291 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 6 Mar 91 p 1

[Editorial: "Toward a More Effective European Role"]

[Text] With the beginning of the scheduled visit by the European troika to a number of Middle Eastern countries, Arab hopes are raised higher than ever before, hoping to see a more effective and sincere European role than over the past many years. Europe then was only a maker of fragile initiatives and was incapable of taking one practical step on the road to the cherished peace.

Today, we rely on a more important European role because we think that Europe, which went far behind the United States in the Gulf war under the slogan of implementing the UN Security Council resolutions and defending international legitimacy, now enjoys a better position and a greater role in formulating international policies, especially since many European leaders are now openly speaking of partnership and friendship with the United States on whose side they fought fraternal Iraq.

Thus, we believe that at this stage in the life of the Middle East, Europe has become qualified to play the role that is anticipated of it as a maker of real initiatives—initiatives that take into consideration the interests of all parties in the region, especially because we know that the United States, which monopolized the peace process in the Middle East, remained incapable of making any progress in this regard as a result of a host of internal factors known to everybody.

Therefore, we follow the scheduled European delegation's visit with great interest, especially since the tour comes amid movement, contacts, and consultations by many sides, all designed to exploit the political momentum created by the Gulf war to launch a peace process that will tackle all complex Middle East crises, foremost being the Arab-Israeli conflict and the Palestine question.

If the EC employed all of its great stature in support of the efforts for a special mechanism to establish just, lasting, and comprehensive peace in the Middle East, we think that the countries of the Common Market will be able to give substance to the peace prospects looming in the horizon of a region fed up with wars and tension. At the same time, the EC will be able to present itself to the Arabs not only as the U.S. partner in the war, but also as Washington's partner in making peace and establishing security, stability, and progress for all people of the region.

Al-Hirawi Sends Bush Message, Asks For Support

NC0603131291 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 0900 GMT 6 Mar 91

[Text] President Ilyas al-Hirawi today addressed a message to U.S. President George Bush following the end of the Gulf war.

President al-Hirawi emphasized the need for supporting the al-Ta'if plan, which allows Lebanon to reassert the government's full authority over the Lebanese territories.

President al-Hirawi also (?thanked) President Bush for the constant U.S. commitment to Lebanon's unity, its sovereignty, independence and the safety of its territories. He asserted that Lebanon is awaiting your support for its efforts to achieve a full implementation of Security Council Resolution 425 as soon as possible in order to secure a full withdrawal of Israeli forces from southern Lebanon. The president also said that the Arab-Israeli dispute should be resolved on just and fair bases which will allow all of the people of the region to live in peace and security.

President al-Hirawi concluded his message by stressing that aggression does not pay and that the sovereignty and [word indistinct] of the security of countries, no matter how (?big they are), will be safeguarded under the new security order.

Al-Tufayli Denies Connection to Hostages Issue

NC0603214191 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1715 GMT 6 Mar 91

[Text] Hizballah Secretary General Shaykh Subhi al-Tufayli has denied any connection between Hizballah and the hostages issue.

He also said that the new security order means imposing imperialist authority. We reject any U.S. security connection with our country, he added.

Cabinet Meets, Discusses Beirut Security Plan

NC0703005991 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 2015 GMT 6 Mar 91

[Statement by Information Minister Albert Mansur following the 6 March cabinet meeting in Beirut—recorded]

[Excerpts] The Cabinet first discussed the political situation, and some important decisions were made, which I will read to you. The Cabinet then discussed items on the agenda.

Regarding the general political situation and the issue of the boycott, it has been decided to resolve the issue in the next Cabinet session. It has also been decided to place on the agenda of the next Cabinet session the issue of a bill regarding the appointment of deputies and a bill regarding the establishment of the economic and social council.

The Cabinet asked the committee entrusted with preparing the final report on the issue of disbanding the militias to submit its report before 21 March, so that a decision can be made on the issue.

The Cabinet then decided to reopen the port of Beirut effective 15 March. It reaffirmed an earlier decision to establish a maritime operations room to control operations at the port and in the illegal ports. [passage omitted]

The defense minister briefed the Cabinet on the Greater Beirut security plan. He informed the Cabinet that implementation of the plan will be completed by the end of next week. He also briefed the Cabinet about measures taken by the Army to merge the brigades. We were informed that the merging has been completed. Any rumors about hesitation or failure of some elements to join their designated units are untrue. The merging operation was accomplished fully and according to plan. The cabinet was also informed that the army has ended the requirement of protection money, which was imposed on oil companies and on the importation of oil at al-Dawrah port.

The foreign minister then briefed the Cabinet on the results of his visits to France, Italy, and the Vatican and on the talks held with the officials in the three states. He informed the Cabinet that loans totaling $600 million have been approved by these states and the EEC. These loans are long-term, between 20 and 25 years, with a grace period of five years and very low interest. [passage omitted]

Shaykh Zayid: UAE 'Will Not Forget' Lebanon

NC0403184691 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 1630 GMT 4 Mar 91

[Text] President Ilyah al-Hirawi received a telephone call this morning from Shaykh Zayid Bin-Sultan Al Nuhayyan, president of the United Arab Emirates [UAE]. During the call, the UAE president stressed that his country will not forget Lebanon and that the Arabs are interested in assisting Lebanon once the Gulf crisis is over.

Army Reopens Roads to East Beirut

NC0703110791 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 0530 GMT 7 Mar 91

[Text] All roads leading to al-Ashrafiyah [in East Beirut] were reopened yesterday after Lebanese Army engineering units removed mines, barriers, and ramparts from al-Siryan District up to the Lycee and al-Barjawi quarters. The Lebanese Army also raided certain centers and buildings suspected of containing weapons.

The National Defense Ministry information department released the following: Certain information media with well-known inclinations continue their misleading campaign against the Army and its role. The latest such campaign led to reports about difficulties and problems

confronting the process of merging Army brigades. The Army command is careful to emphasize that the rebuilding of the Army on national foundations has gone a long way and that the elimination of the sectarian character in the Army brigades is proceeding according to plan despite all contradictory claims, which have been exposed and can no longer deceive public opinion.

The Army command affirms that concern for freedoms must conform to honesty, accuracy, and objectivity. It asserts that attempts to exploit the issue of the Army for political purposes will not serve these parties because the command made its decision, withdrawing the Army from this arena and placing it in its natural place above political disputes.

Fatah Denies Report on International Terrorism

NC0703125891 Beirut AL-SAFIR in Arabic 6 Mar 91 p 8

[From the "One Homeland" column]

[Text] Fatah-the Revolutionary Council denied a report in a BBC newscast last Saturday [2 March], citing Palestinian sources in Syria on the possibility of "a wave of terrrorism at the international level if the United States tried to humiliate Iraq ... and that the Abu-Nidal [Sabri al-Banna] group in Baghdad may embark on this wave." In a statement distributed yesterday, Fatah said that the content of the report "was written in Tunis by the PLO leadership and in the handwriting of the [PLO] Executive Committee Chairman." Fatah said that "Zionist tools" are behind this report which contributes to "undermining the BBC credibility."

Lebanese Forces To Sell Arms to Zaire, Armenia

NC0503095491 Beirut AL-SHIRA' in Arabic 4 Mar 91 p 7

[Text] The Lebanese Forces have sent a high-level security delegation to Zaire to sell some of their heavy weapons to various quarters in that African country. The Lebanese Forces are doing this so that they will not be obliged to hand over these weapons to the Lebanese State, which has vowed not to pay one piaster to any militia that will be forced to disband itself.

The Lebanese Forces are also selling some of these weapons to Soviet Armenia, after the growing number of armed militias in that country, where a situation exists that resembles Lebanon. Armenia will see grave disturbances which will have serious domestic repercussions in the Soviet Union itself.

Army Dismantles Katyushas Directed at Israel

NC0603205691 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1715 GMT 6 Mar 91

[Text] Today the Lebanese Army dismantled three Katyusha rockets discovered on the outskirts of (Kfir) village. The rockets were directed toward the border strip and northern Israel and were moved to Rashayya barracks.

Syrian Army Confiscates Weapons, Drugs

NC0703105591 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 0530 GMT 7 Mar 91

[Text] During the past two days, the Syrian Arab Forces conducted raids on a large scale, involving many villages in the Ba'labakk and al-Hirmil areas. The raids targeted the drug processing centers, and the Syrian forces confiscated large quantities estimated at dozens of tons of hashish, opium, and heroin. The Syrian forces also confiscated the processing equipment and other relevant material.

The campaign involved the villages of Dayr al-Ahmar, 'Aynata, Nibha, al-Labwah, Rasm al-Hadath, al-'Ayn, Fisan, al-Qasr, al- Mansurah, and al-Hirmil quarters. In addition, the Syrian forces impounded several types of medium-and light-caliber weapons. They transported the confiscated articles on civilian and military trucks to Ba'labakk and from there to 'Anjar.

Resistance Group Destroys Israeli Tank

NC0703105991 (Clandestine) Voice of the Oppressed in Arabic to Lebanon 0630 GMT 7 Mar 91

[Text] According to security reports from the struggling western al-Biqa' region, this morning an Islamic resistance group detonated an explosive under a Zionist enemy patrol which was on a research operation around the al-Ahmadiyah position. A Merkava tank was destroyed in the attack.

The reports add that the enemy's army immediately embarked on a large-scale search operation.

In another development, the Zionist occupation troops stationed on the hills overlooking the city of al-Nabatiyah searched the forest areas surrounding its positions. During this campaign, al-Nabatiyah came under heavy 12.7-mm caliber sniper fire. There have been no reports on casualties.

Al-Asad Receives Kuwaiti Minister, Message

NC0603182691 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 1615 GMT 6 Mar 91

[Text] At 1515 today President Hafiz al-Asad received Shaykh Sabah al-Ahmad al-Sabah, Kuwaiti deputy prime minister and foreign minister. The meeting was attended by Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar'. Shaykh al-Sabah conveyed to the president a message from Shaykh Jabir al-Ahmad al-Sabah, the amir of Kuwait. The president gave him a reply message and asked him to convey his greetings and best wishes to his highness the amir and to our Arab people in Kuwait. The conversation dealt with the situation in the Gulf.

Shaykh al-Sabah expressed the thanks of the Kuwaiti amir, Government, and people to Syria for its honorable Arab stand and its adherence to noble Arab principles.

Free Iraq Council Delegation Talks With Khaddam

LD0603193791 (Clandestine) Voice of Free Iraq in Arabic 1500 GMT 6 Mar 91

[Text] Vice President 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam met yesterday in Damascus with a Free Iraq Council delegation headed by Sa'd Salih Jabir. Mr Jabir told news agencies that the delegation, which was in Damascus by official invitation, met with a delegation from the General Secretariat of the United Action, which comprises representatives of 17 opposition parties and organizations in Iraq.

During the meeting they discussed a program of action for saving Iraq and an agreement on essential lines relating to the unity of the Iraqi state, democracy, and elections in the next phase.

A Free Iraq Council delegation is due to participate in the Iraqi National Congress meetings, which will discuss three main issues, namely, the forming of an Iraqi parliament or a national assembly, the creation of a caretaker government, and the laying down of a program of action for the support and expansion of the scope of the protest movement opposing the regime's tyrant, Saddam, inside Iraq to speed up his removal and his regime's removal.

Meanwhile the Free Iraq Council obtained information which indicates that disturbances have spread to the capital, Baghdad, and that the two towns of al-Thawrah and al-Sh'ulah, in the suburbs of Baghdad, are controlled by some citizens who have managed to expel government officials there.

Iran's Habibi, Velayati Arrive in Damascus 7 Mar

NC0703095191 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 0915 GMT 7 Mar 91

[Text] Dr. Hasan Habibi, first vice president of the Islamic Republic of Iran, arrived in Damascus this morning. He is accompanied by Foreign Minister Dr. 'Ali Akbar Velayati.

Vice President 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam received the Iranian vice president and the delegation accompanying him.

Meet With Al-Asad

NC0703114991 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 1115 GMT 7 Mar 91

[Text] President Hafiz al-Asad received Iranian First Vice President Dr. Hasan Habibi, Foreign Minister Dr. 'Ali Akbar Velayati, and the delegation accompanying them at 1200 today.

The meeting was attended by Vice President 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam, the Syrian ambassador in Tehran, and the Iranian ambassador in Damascus.

Dr. Habibi arrived in Damascus at 1000 this morning.

Groups Issue Statement To Mark March Revolution

NC0703150291 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 1215 GMT 7 Mar 91

[Excerpts] Popular organizations and professional unions in Syria have emphasized that the glorious March revolution vindicated our party's principles which were the product of our masses' struggle as the means and end of the revolution. In a statement to mark the 28th anniversary of the glorious March revolution, they said the revolution took inspiration from pan-Arab thought and the power of the masses, as well as the potential of the homeland, to promote a situation recommending itself to forging a melting pot for people from all walks of life. The statement pointed out the achievements made down the road of building a national economy, especially since the launching of the corrective movement led by struggler President Hafiz al-Asad on 16 November 1970. [passage omitted]

The popular organizations and professional unions concluded their statement by voicing their abiding readiness to exert themselves in the interest of increased and improved production and self-reliance as well as to develop their creative initiatives to further national unity and solidify Syria's pan-Arab stand, which since the glorious corrective movement, has turned into a bastion for freedom, a haven for strugglers, and an iron-clad guarantee against the dangers looming over the Arab nation, flying the banner of right and supreme pan-Arab interests.

Bangladesh

Khaleda Zia Demands Trial of Ousted Ershad

BK0603164091 Dhaka Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 6 Mar 91

[Text] The Bangladesh Nationalist Party, BNP, held a big rally at Shere Bangla Nagar in Dhaka this afternoon to mark the party's victory in the February 27 election. Addressing the rally, BNP Chief Begum Khaleda Zia explained her party program aimed at economic development and self-reliance in all sectors of national life. She said BNP as a majority party is going to form the next government. Her government, she said, would work honestly to fulfill the pledges BNP had made during the election campaign. Begum Khaleda Zia sought people's cooperation in the implementation of the party pledges. In this context, she called on the people to maintain peace and discipline. The BNP chief said her government would give priority to increase production in fields and factories, supply of electricity in rural areas, setting up of cottage industries, welfare of the workers, restoration of peaceful atmosphere in the educational campus, and spread of education.

Describing the people as the source of all powers, Begum Khaleda Zia reiterated that her government would work sincerely to establish democracy on a firm and sound footing. She also demanded a white paper on the misdeeds of the Ershad regime and trial of the former president.

Siraj Urges Formation of Majority Party Cabinet

BK0603162691 Dhaka Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 6 Mar 91

[Text] Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal President Shahjahan Siraj has called upon the acting president to end the controversy by forming a Cabinet under the leadership of the majority party leader. He said the wastage of time and complicating matters even after a free and fair election would instigate conspirators and bring disaster for the country. At a news conference in Dhaka today, Mr. Shahjahan Siraj said his party would honor the people's verdict given to BNP [Bangladesh Nationalist Party].

Ershad Supporters Abandon Rally After Warning

BK0703010291 Hong Kong AFP in English 1825 GMT 6 Mar 91

[Text] Dhaka, March 6 (AFP)—Supporters of deposed Bangladeshi president Hussain Mohammad Ershad abandoned a planned rally at a diplomatic enclave here Wednesday after police warned them against violating a ban on protests in the area.

Witnesses said some 500 activists of Mr. Ershad's ousted Jatiya Party (JP) gathered at the Gulshan residence of the party's Acting Chief Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury to celebrate the former head of state's election to parliament from five constituencies in last week's general elections.

But in view of the police ban on public gatherings of more than five people imposed earlier in the capital's affluent district of Gulshan, the organisers decided to abandon a planned rally and instead held an impromptu reception on the lawn of Mr. Chowdhury's house, they said.

"We are law-abiding citizens ... We don't want to break the law," Mr. Chowdhury told the activists before meeting police officials outside.

Mr. Chowdhury's residence is less than 100 yards (metres) away from a government house in the same area where Mr. Ershad is currently under house arrest.

Police later escorted a small delegation to Mr. Ershad's heavily guarded villa to deliver 25 bouquets of flowers, witnesses said, which were left on a barbed-wire barricade outside the house.

A police official later said they needed clearance from seniors before giving the flowers and other presents to Mr. Ershad.

During his brief speech, Mr. Chowdhury, a former prime minister, indicated that his party would be forced to launch a nationwide movement if the former president and other detained leaders were not freed immediately and arrest warrants against several others were not withdrawn.

Mr. Ershad, 61, stood down on December 6 in the face of popular protest against his nine-year rule.

He faces charges of corruption, illegal possession of weapons and abuse of powers and will appear before a special tribunal to answer the arms case on March 19.

Envoy to Kuwait Leaves To Resume Office 8 Mar

BK0603131291 Dhaka Radio Bangladesh External Service in English 1230 GMT 6 Mar 91

[Text] Ambassador K.M. Shihabuddin leaves on Friday [8 March] to resume functions of Bangladesh Embassy in Kuwait. A Foreign Office spokesman said in Dhaka Tuesday that Mr. Shihabuddin will be accompanied by four officials. Bangladesh, like other countries, suspended its mission in Kuwait City in mid-September last year after the Iraqi occupation.

India

Shekhar Explains Reasons for Resignation

BK0703042491 Delhi Doordarshan Television Network in English 0230 GMT 7 Mar 91

[Interview with Prime Minister Chandra Shekhar by Ranjan Grover, PRESS TRUST OF INDIA, PTI, TV correspondent, on 6 March—recorded, place not given]

[Text] [Grover] Mr. Chandra Shekhar, you resigned barely a few hours back. Now, what prompted you to take this decision?

[Shekhar] It was simple, because parliamentary democracy is the game of, I think, numbers. The government was formed with the support of Congress party. It was a minority government. Existence of government was not possible on the floor of the house without the support of the Congress party. Congress party for its own reasons boycotted the house, though officially they did not announce that they are withdrawing the support. So, opposition was there and there was a crucial voting on the motion of thanks to the president [for his address to the parliament]. I did not want that the government should be defeated on that question, especially when the motion of thanks to the president is there. Then it would have looked very odd about it and it was not very proper for me that the party which was claiming to support us was not present on the floor of house. Their mere intention was not going to give us the moral authority to continue in the government, so I resigned.

[Grover] Sir, one is tempted to ask that did not you expect a sort of this to happen at any time?

[Shekhar] No, this is not the question of expecting, because in politics everything is possible and when you are expecting the support of a party with which you are not in total agreement in the perspective about the problems before the nation, so, at any time, any moment, such a situation might have arisen. I do not say that it was unexpected. But I did not expect that it will happen on such smallest of matters, because the question that they raised was not commensurate with the attitude that they had adopted, because more crucial issues were before the nation and it should have not been brought to that level at which the Congress party decided to attack us.

[Grover] Could you briefly tell us the exact sequence of events which led to the government quitting?

[Shekhar] No, I shall not like to go into the sequence of events, but I shall like to recall when this government was formed. Myself and the Congress party both agreed that the situation was critical. The situation was such that immediate elections were not in the interest of the nation. So, we agreed to work together. It is true that we did not talk about the common program. The support from the Congress party was unconditional. But after two months or three months of the government's functioning, we began to see some doubts about their attitude toward the government. I shall not like to go into the issues on which there is this objection, because it is always their right to take a view on a particular issue.

The recent event—I was told on Sunday [3 March] morning that some two policemen of Haryana were snooping somewhere around the house of Mr. Rajiv Gandhi. I immediately ordered an enquiry and I made a statement in the Lok Sabha. All the members of the Congress party were satisfied with that. The same evening I met Rajiv Gandhi at a social function and I told him that it is a very embarrassing situation and I am looking into this method. Next morning when I went to the parliament, I was told that they are going to boycott the house. So, it looked to be a little childish. I did not want to believe it. But when they made this statement, I was really suprised that for such a small issue, when the government made it categorically clear that we shall enquire into it and we are ready for any type of enquiry and guilty persons will be punished, but they persisted for it.

Since yesterday they were trying to impose some or trying to make some suggestions which were totally unacceptable to me. So, I had no other option either to accept the suggestions which in my view were totally uncalled for, I do not want to use any harsh word, so I thought better to resign rather than to accept something which I do not think was proper.

[Grover] Now, this rule played by the Congress-I, would you say that this is fair considering its politics and everything they say?

[Shekhar] I do not say about fairness, because fairness is a matter—a relative matter. Everybody deals in politics according to his own mental make up and psychological frame of work. So, we will have to decide the fairness of this issue not from our angle, but from the angle of the Congress party. For us, that is their level and they have done what they thought best.

[Grover] Mr. Chandra Shekhar, this country has seen a phase of unstable governments since the last days of Mr. V.P. Singh. Now, you are still in the chair of the prime minister as of now. What future do you see as far as governments of India are concerned?

[Shekhar] It is true that there has been many a period of unstable governments, but I am quite optimistic about the future of this country, because people's (?points) are very stable and in every critical moment they have taken a very correct decision. I am quite confident that people will take correct decisions and the future of the country will be secured in their hands.

[Grover] Do you think this time is proper to go for fresh elections?

[Shekhar] Well, if you ask my personal opinion, I would not have liked to go for a fresh election at this moment. But there is no option, because politics is the game of possibility. If no other alternative is there, the country cannot remain without a government, and our Constitution does not envisage a situation where we cannot have the elections within six months. So, the government will have to be formed by having a mid-term polls.

[Grover] But, there was some talk when your government came to power that the situation was not right for elections because there might have been violence during the elections. Do you think that phase is over?

[Shekhar] I cannot say that phase is over. But certainly tempers have cooled down. That situation is not there. When this government was constituted or formed in 1990, November, there was a lot of anger, discord, hatred, street fights. Now that situation is not there. Problems remain to be solved, but the people are in a much more sober mood, and at least they are ready to have dialogue, mutual discussion. So, a little change has been there in the atmosphere and that change is for better. I may hope that it will persist.

[Grover] Do you see any change coming up in the composition of either your party or in the nature of any alliances with other parties?

[Shekhar] I cannot say. It is very premature. Let us see how the process develops, because at the last moment during elections, in a country like India many permutations, combinations do take place. So, I cannot foresee what will happen in the coming one or two months.

[Grover] Now again, since you are still in the chair of the prime minister, how should the two situations—one is the economic situation, the other is the big communal problem which India faces—now, how should these two be tackled?

[Shekhar] Now, I think that both these problems can be tackled only by involving the people in it. Politicians or people who are at the helm of affairs should understand that solution of India's problems lies in the willing cooperation of our people. When I talk of willing cooperation of the people, we must understand their aspirations and urges. Many a time it looks on the face value to be very rigid or very rabid. But we should not jump to conclusions. Take for example the question of communal problem or the question of minorities. Many a time minorities have spoken a very aggressive language. If we take political decision on the dictionary meaning of what they say, we shall always reach a wrong political conclusion but if you try to understand the inner feelings, the feeling of hearts, the feeling of apprehension, the feeling of being neglected. So, our whole attitude will be different and we shall deal with those problems with understanding, sympathy and compulsion. This is what is required in this country—whether this is the matter of downtrodden sections of the society, of the minorities of the scheduled tribes, scheduled caste people, of the backward, or the people who are feeling alienated because of one reason or the other. Our attitude should not be that of to use the coercive power to silence them but to try to win over by making them understand that their destiny lies in the cooperation and help with all other sections of the population in this country.

[Grover] Specifically, on the economic front, India is saddled with a big IMF loan, and it seems by all indications that there are lot of austerity measures which any government would have to take. Now, given these factors, how do you think our economic policy should be run best?

[Shekhar] I think that one thing should be clear in the mind of the people who are responsible for framing the economic policies that we should not give undue hopes. We should not try to compete with the developed economies of the world. We should tell our people that we are a scarce-resource society. A country of India's size with the complex problems cannot be baled out by outside help. We will have to help ourselves. When I talk of helping ourselves, it does not mean that we do not want outside help. We do want outside help, but we should also try to learn how to spend less if the resources are meager at our hands. So, austerity is not just a slogan, it is an economic strategy, and that strategy has to be taken as a path if India wants to stand on her own legs. So, I think that first thing is that we should cut our coat according to our cloth—number one. And—number two—we should give an impression—not impression, a clear message to the people that we should try to learn to live within the means. And, of course, help from outside should be welcomed, and the other thing is that biggest assets of our country is the manpower. We will have to create a situation where the manpower is utilized. For that we do not need only the most modern technology, but the appropriate technology. In certain areas, the modern technology is welcomed, but in many areas where we have to produce more revenue for employment, we should take the appropriate technology and this is where the slogan of cottage industries, village industries, small-scale industries is quite essential for a country like India. There are many other things which can be taken into consideration.

[Grover] Mr. Chandra Shekhar, as you leave the prime minister's office now, do you look back on this as a zenith of your political career?—A; B—how do you assess this in terms of governing? Have you been able to give India a fair enough government for the last 100 odd days?

[Shekhar] I do not know—this is a very personal question, but with all modesty I may like to say, and make it very clear, I never thought that by becoming prime minister I became something very big. I have seen many prime ministers during last few years of my political life. I never thought that being prime minister is something becoming very great as a human being. But surely it is a great honor. And, if you want to know about my experience, I cannot say with much authority because it is a very small and very short period. But I was overwhelmed by the cooperation that I got from the bureaucracy and the response that I received from the people. And I feel quite optimistic about the future of this country. If we approach them in right manner, we can get tremendous response from the people and we can get any work done by the bureaucratic set up that we have inherited from the past.

[Grover] What would you rate the major achievements of your government?

[Shekhar] I shall leave it to the persons like you. I shall not like to make any claim on that account.

[Grover] Okay, finally Mr. Chandra Shekhar, how do you see your personal political future?

[Shekhar] I cannot say because I never bothered about my personal political future. I think that as a political worker I should do my little bit. I have been telling time and again that I do not consider any person to be the full stop of history. Even the persons and people like Gandhi and Jayprakash Narayan, they are the semicolons of history. We are not even commas of history. So, we should do our bit. Even if we prove to be a small link in the great chain of human endeavor, we should feel satisfied. So, I am quite satisfied about my political career and even for the future I am not very much disappointed, nor I suffer from any apprehension. The future is quite secure for me. But the security of my future is not the security of the future of the people of this country. If we are in politics, we should aim ourselves to see that this sense of security is inculcated among the people who have remained deprived, neglected, and exploited so far.

[Grover] Thank you very much, Mr. Chandra Shekhar.

Additional Shekhar Interview

BK0603175291 Delhi Doordarshan Television Network in English 1600 GMT 6 Mar 91

[Interview with Prime Minister Chandra Shekhar by unidentified reporters—place not given]

[Text] The Prime Minister Mr. Chandra Shekhar, has resigned. He drove into the Rashtrapati Bhavan [President House] today and submitted the resignation of his Council of Ministers to the president, Mr. R. Venkataraman. Mr. Chandra Shekhar also recommended to the president the dissolution of the Lok Sabha and holding of fresh elections. The president accepted the resignation and asked Mr. Chandra Shekhar to continue until alternative arrangements are made. A Rashtrapati Bhavan communique says that the president will take a decision separately on the question of the dissolution of the Lok Sabha.

Speaking to newsmen after submitting his resignation, Mr. Chandra Shekhar said that the president is expected to take a decision within 24 hours.

[Begin recording] [first reporter] [question indistinct]

[Shekhar, in Hindi] Look, this is not the question of hope or despair. This right is vested in the honorable president and I will leave this decision to him, and I do not want to make any speculation in this regard.

[Second reporter] Do you feel betrayed by the Congress Party or [words indistinct] coming anyway?

[Shekhar] No, I don't feel betrayed by Congress Party or anybody; but I don't understand their decision that on such a small issue, such a big decision should be taken. I shall leave it to your judgment. [interruptions by reporters] No, I don't claim any big achievement, but when I took over as the prime minister of this country, there was all-around tension in the country. The situation has not improved to my satisfaction, but tension has been eased. These people who were confronting each other in the streets, they came around the table to discuss issues. That was another... [changes thought] The people began to talk and have dialogue on issues of a very sensitive nature.

[Third reporter] Are you unhappy that you left your task unfinished?.

[Shekhar] No, I have not. It is not a personal task. It is the nation's task; and even in my whole lifetime, I would not have been able to finish the task that is before the nation. So it is not the question of whether I have fulfilled my task or not; but I am fully satisfied that within three months or near about four months, I could not have done better as an individual and in the government.

[Fourth reporter] Four months ago you said time was not ripe for elections; now you have suggested the elections.

[Shekhar] Even now I say that time is not ripe for elections, but the country has again been brought into a situation where there is no option but elections, so the country cannot remain without a government, and without elections, according to the constitution, we have no other option.

[Fifth reporter] Why did you choose this option of going to the president and resigning rather than be defeated on the floor of the house?

[Shekhar] Well, I don't know. I don't indulge in this disgraceful thing. When I know that I am not (?getting) the majority support in the house, why should I get defeated and go to the president after that?

[Sixth reporter] What do you visualize for the country now?

[Shekhar] I am great optimist. I have got full faith in the robust decision of our people, and something good will emerge from the decision within 24 hours.

[Reporters] Thank you. [end recording]

Shekhar Asks Janata Dal-S To Prepare for Polls

BK0703091891 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0830 GMT 7 Mar 91

[Text] The prime minister, Mr. Chandra Shekhar, says he is totally opposed to the formation of an alternative government by the Congress-I at the center. Talking to UNI [UNITED NEWS OF INDIA] in New Delhi today, he also said that he is not aware of any move by the Congress-I to stake its claim to form the government.

Asked about the ongoing political developments, Mr. Chandra Shekhar said he is keeping himself away from

all such activities and attending to his routine responsibilities. He also said that he has asked the Janata Dal-S to get ready for the elections.

On the adjournment of both houses of parliament, the prime minister said the decision was taken by the presiding officers concerned.

Gandhi, Party Colleagues Hold 'Emergency' Meeting

BK0603155291 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1535 GMT 6 Mar 91

[Text] The Congress-I president, Mr. Rajiv Gandhi, held an emergency meeting with some of his senior party colleagues to assess the situation. Mr. Gandhi had called on the president, Mr. Venkataraman, earlier in the day. In his first reaction, Mr. Gandhi described Mr. Chandra Shekhar's decision to resign as unilateral and unfortunate. He said his party had not withdrawn support from the Janata Dal-S ministry; he, however, maintained that the Congress-I felt hurt at being spied upon.

The Congress-I has decided not to stake its claim to form a government at the center but to seek a fresh mandate instead. This was decided at a meeting of the Congress-I Working Committee in New Delhi this evening. Announcing the decision a short while ago, the party spokesman, Mr. V.N. Gadgil, said the party's stand has always been to come to power with the people's mandate, and therefore, it has decided to opt for elections.

Gandhi Denies Blame

BK0603172891 Delhi Doordarshan Television Network in English 1600 GMT 6 Mar 91

[Text] The Congress-I president, Mr. Rajiv Gandhi, called on the president, Mr. Venkataraman, and apprised him of his party's stand. Mr. Gandhi also had an emergency meeting with some of his senior party colleagues to assess the situation.

Talking to Doordarshan [Delhi television] correspondent, Upma Bhatnagar, Mr. Rajiv Gandhi said his party is ready for the fresh mandate.

[Begin recording] [Bhatnagar] You have been blamed for the present crisis, what do you have to say about this?

[Gandhi] Well, it's very to easy to blame. We supported this government for many months last. And in spite of that support, they thought it fit to have political espionage done here, at my house, at my office. It's a total lack of faith on the part of the Chandra Shekhar government on the Congress, and we wanted some action by the Chandra Shekhar government which would show, which would demonstrate that they do have faith in the Congress—actions against those people who were responsible for this, not just the two constables. You can't hold the two constables responsible for political espionage. They didn't do it on their own. It is the political level that was behind it. That needed action to be taken. Unfortunately, they didn't do that. And we did not withdraw support. In fact, I always said that we would not go into the house, till some action is taken. It was Mr. Chandra Shekhar unilaterally who gave his resignation. He didn't consult us, he didn't talk with us on the issue and ... [changes thought] well, how we can be held responsible?

[Bhatnagar] Do you believe the election is the only alternative now?

[Gandhi] The Congress feels that whenever there are such difficulties, it is the people that must decide. We would like to go for election, to get a mandate from the people and come back with more strength in the Lok Sabha. At such a difficult time, we believe that the president is the best person to take decisions and the Congress at least will be looking toward the president to take the right decision according to the Constitution. [end recording]

Gandhi Meets President

BK0703091491 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0830 GMT 7 Mar 91

[Text] The Congress-I president, Mr. Rajiv Gandhi, met the president, Mr. Venkataraman, at Rashtrapati Bhavan [President House] this afternoon. Later, talking to newsmen, he said parliament today was adjourned at the instance of the opposition and his party is ready for elections any time. He said he has not staked his claim to become caretaker prime minister. Mr. Gandhi charged the opposition of dictating terms and adopting pressure tactics to get the vote on accounts passed.

Reactions to Chandra Shekhar's Resignation

BK0603162491 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 6 Mar 91

[Text] The prime minister's resignation has evoked comments from various party leaders with several speculations made about the future political course. The former prime minister and Janata Dal leader, Mr. V.P. Singh, said in Bombay that it was expected and inherent in the situation. The leader of the opposition in the Lok Sabha, Mr. L.K. Advani, said that today's development proves that minority governments are always vulnerable. The leader of the Telugu Desam party, Mr. P. Upendra, said that those who connived in the destabilization of the National Front government have been rightly served. Former Law Minister Mr. Dinesh Goswami, AGP [Asom Gana Parishad], said that the only course left to the president is to call fresh elections. Mr. Amal Dutta, CPI-M [Communist Party of India-Marxist], said that the prime minister's resignation came as expected but too soon.

The National Front chairman, Mr. N.T. Ramarao, has urged the president to dissolve the Lok Sabha and order fresh poll. Talking to newsmen in Warangal, he said the uncertainty of the minority Chandra Shekhar goverment damaged the interest of the nation. He blamed the

Congress-I for the present crisis. The Orissa chief minister, Mr. Biju Patnaik, has said that the fall of the Chandra Shekhar government was inevitable ever since it was not allowed to present the full-fledged budget by the Congress-I.

The Maharashtra chief minister, Mr. Sharad Pawar, has said that Mr. Chandra Shekhar has no authority to suggest to the president dissolution of the Lok Sabha as he had limited strength in the house. He said the most important task before the president is to find a way to pass the vote on account. PTI [PRESS TRUST OF INDIA] reports that Mr. Sharad Pawar has been summoned by the Congress-I president to Delhi.

The West Bengal chief minister, Mr. Jyoti Basu, has said that CPI-M will not support any new government at the center unless the process of fresh elections is started. He told newsmen in Calcutta that president should order elections as it is the only way to solve the crisis.

The Uttar Pradesh chief minister, Mr. Mulayam Singh Yadav, has said that the resignation of Mr. Chandra Shekhar will have no immediate effect on the Janata Dal-S government in the state. Talking to newsmen in Lucknow this evening, he said the atmosphere is not congenial for holding elections in the country. He, however, said his party is ready for the mid-term poll.

The Gujarat chief minister, Mr. Chimanbhai Patel, described Mr. Chandra Shekhar's resignation as unfortunate. The Gujarat Pradesh [State] Congress-I Committee preident, Mr. Natwarlal Shah, said his party is awaiting a directive from the party high command whether to continue its support to the minority government in the state.

The Himachal Pradesh chief minister, Mr. Shanta Kumar, has expressed the hope that all political parties having faith in democracy will press for fresh elections.

Further Reactions to Resignation

BK0703011291 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0035 GMT 7 Mar 91

[Text] More reactions have come in to the resignation of the Chandra Shekhar government. Eminent jurist Mr. Nani Palkhiwala has described the fall of the Chandra Shekhar government as the beginning of political uncertainty. In a statement, he said the fresh elections will not solve any problem. It will only bring into existence a new edition of the present Lok Sabha.

The former President Mr. Sanjiva Reddy has described the resignation of the prime minister, Mr. Chandra Shekhar, as unfortunate and said it has complicated the task of the president. Talking to UNI [UNITED NEWS OF INDIA], Mr. Reddy said it is the duty of all citizens to see that the present crisis does not deepen further so as to threaten the unity of the country.

The former chief minister of Tamil Nadu and DMK [Dravia Munnetra Kazagham], Mr. Karunanidhi, said justice to the democratic feelings of the people would be done only if parliament is dissolved and fresh elections are held.

The Maharashtra chief minister, Mr. Sharad Pawar, has said that the Congress-I has not voted out Mr. Chandra Shekhar. He himself has resigned. Mr. Pawar was speaking to newsmen in Bombay before leaving for New Delhi yesterday. He expressed confidence that the Congress-I will find a way out to resolve the present political impasse.

The Sikkim chief minister, Mr. Narbahadur Bhandari, has described the resignation of the prime minister, Mr. Chandra Shekhar, as a most unfortunate political crisis at a time when the country is facing serious challenges.

Opposition leaders in parliament had assured the Lok Sabha that they will not shy from the constitutional and fiscal responsibilities in the context of the vote-on-account. They said they will act according to the nation's priorities.

Major Parties Demand Dissolution, Urge Elections

BK0703030491 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0240 GMT 7 Mar 91

[Text] In separate memorandums to the president, the National Front, left parties, the Akali Dal, the Indian People's Front, the BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] and its allies demanded dissolution of the Lok Sabha and the holding of immediate elections. They claimed that 285 members out of 513 effective strength of the house are in favor of fresh polls.

The Congress-I has also called for fresh elections. This was decided at a meeting of the Congress-I Working Committee in New Delhi yesterday.

Parliament Adjourned Until 11 Mar

BK0703070491 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0630 GMT 7 Mar 91

[Excerpt] Both houses of parliament have been adjourned till Monday the 11th of this month. The Lok Sabha speaker, Mr. Rabi Ray, announced the adjournment of the house this morning before commencement of any business. In the Raja Sabha, the announcement was made by the chairman, Dr. Shanker Dayal Sharma. Congress-I members, who have been abstaining from the two houses for the last two days, were present. [passage omitted]

Police Detain Top Sikh Leader in Punjab

BK0703090691 Hong Kong AFP in English 0844 GMT 7 Mar 91

[Text] New Delhi, March 7 (AFP)—Police Thursday detained India's most powerful Sikh politician while he

was on his way to attend an anti-government meeting in Punjab state, the PRESS TRUST OF INDIA (PTI) reported.

Policemen held Simranjit Singh Mann, president of the Sikhs' Akali Dal party, and two party colleagues near a village in the northern state's Amritsar district, the news agency said.

Mr. Mann was going to another village to attend a public rally called to protest the killing February 25 of six Sikh farmers by Indian army soldiers who are deployed in parts of Punjab to stem escalating Sikh militant violence.

No further details were available.

Mr. Mann, a former police officer, lashed out against New Delhi after the killings, which he said was a "massacre" and showed that the Indian Government did not want to let the Sikh community live in peace.

Two days later, he asked New Delhi to immediately pull out the army from Punjab and simultaneously urged Sikhs to choose between "death and liberation" if the demand was not conceded.

The Indian Government has said that the farmers were killed because they were mistakenly thought to be Sikh militants, and promised disciplinary action against the soldiers.

Sikh guerrillas are fighting for an independent theocratic homeland called Khalistan (land of the pure) in Punjab.

Iran

Velayati, Hammadi Discuss Gulf Security

LD0603180791 Tehran IRIB Television Network in Persian 1600 GMT 6 Mar 91

[Text] Mr. Sa'dun Hammadi, Iraqi deputy prime minister and member of the Command Council met and conferred with Foreign Affairs Minister Velayati today.

Hammadi elaborated during the meeting on the latest developments concerning the crisis in the region and the latest conditions in Iraq.

Mr. Velayati referred to the efforts of the Islamic Republic of Iran aimed at the peaceful resolution of the Persian Gulf crisis. He said: We considered the issue of withdrawal from Kuwait as final, and our suggestions to you about withdrawal from Kuwait on a voluntary basis and without becoming involved in a conflict was in line with the interests of the nations of Iraq and Kuwait and the region's well-being. Unfortunately, you chose a different path and today we witness massive destruction in Iraq and Kuwait and irreparable human and material losses to the people of both countries and the vast presence of foreign forces in the region. Those conditions have made the region's nations face an unpleasant and vague situation.

Mr. Sa'dun Hammadi, elaborated in response on the way in which the allied force's air attacks were implemented, and on damages and destructions caused by those attacks and recounted reasons for the Iraqi withdrawal from Kuwait and the acceptance of the multinational force's conditions.

In those discussions emphasis was placed on the countries of the region providing the security of the Persian Gulf region and the hope was expressed that those countries employ their efforts toward stability of that security.

Mr. Sa'dun Hammadi left Tehran for Baghdad this evening.

USSR's Belonogov Discusses Gulf With Velayati

LD0603171791 Tehran IRNA in English 1606 GMT 6 Mar 91

[Text] Tehran, Mar. 6, IRNA—Soviet Deputy Foreign Minister Aleksandr Belonogov today briefed Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati on Moscow's attitudes towards the latest developments in the Persian Gulf and Iraq's internal situation.

Belonogov said in view of the new situation of the region it was necessary that a new security system, both in terms of its structure and the number of countries involved, should be drawn up by the countries of the region themselves.

The Soviet official said he was here for talks with Iranian authorities on how the security of the region should be provided and also to learn about Iran's viewpoints on the future of Iraq and that of the region.

Belonogov made it clear that the Soviet Union was not indifferent towards regional security and developments.

"With regards to the strong ties between Tehran and Moscow, the two countries have many reasons to have similar stands," Belonogov said.

Velayati in response expressed regret that "the Iraqis did not heed our advice or the statements of Soviet officials. They should have withdrawn from Kuwait (earlier)."

He said Iran's viewpoints on the new security arrangement for the region was quite clear, and that is any plan in this regard should involve the countries of the region. "The Persian Gulf states should not repeat their past mistakes," he advised.

Velayati also categorically refuted certain mass media allegations that Iran was involved in recent unrests inside Iraq, saying "the Islamic Republic will not interfere in the internal affairs of Iraq or any other country."

"The Islamic Republic is against Iraq's partition and against intervention of any country in the internal affairs of Iraq, believing that it is only the Iraqi people who should decide their own fate," he said.

Like the Soviet Union, Iran was in the belief that widespread cooperation between the two neighboring states could ensure security and peace in the region.

Meets Va'ezi 7 Mar

LD0703112491 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 7 Mar 91

[Text] USSR Deputy Foreign Minister Aleksandr Belonogov, who has come to Tehran to exchange views with officials of the Islamic Republic of Iran on the Latest developments in the Persian Gulf region, the regional security plan, and bilateral relations, has held his second round of talks with Deputy Foreign Minister Va'ezi. In this round the two sides studied the latest developments in the region, particularly since the Iraqi withdrawal from Kuwait, and exchanged views on ways of creating security, peace, and stability in the Persian Gulf region. It was agreed that in view of the proximity of the two countries' stances on this issue the two sides should regularly hold talks.

During the talks the expanding Iran-USSR ties and ways of expanding even further the two neighboring countries' relations were also reviewed and discussed. The two sides also discussed the latest development on the Afghanistan issue and agreed to exchange some delegations for this purpose in the near future.

Velayati Says Gulf Security Region's Business

LD0703075191 Tehran IRNA in English 0621 GMT 7 Mar 91

[Text] Tehran, March 7 IRNA—Sweden's Agriculture Minister Mats Helistrom who is heading a 50-man delegation from his country to Tehran said to Iran's Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati here Wednesday that his government is interested in broadening relations with Iran. [words indistinct] reviewed the latest developments in the Persian Gulf. Velayati said in the same connection that "security cannot be brought into the Persian Gulf from the outside, and the task of safeguarding the Persian Gulf security is the business of the Persian Gulf states."

The Iranian foreign minister told the visiting Swedish minister that security would return into the Persian Gulf by the implementation of the UN Security Council Resolution 598 and especially Article 8.

Article 8 of the resolution provides for the involvement of the UN secretary general for returning peace into the Persian Gulf upon consultation with Iran, Iraq and the rest of the Persian Gulf states.

Karrubi Stresses Cooperation With Japan

LD0603201691 Tehran IRIB Television Network in Persian 1600 GMT 6 Mar 91

[Excerpt] Mr. (Masoyokis Fojio), a member of Japan's representative assembly and head of the Iran-Japan friendship in the Diet, today met Mr. Karrubi, speaker of the Islamic Consultative Majles. He expressed the interests of Japan's Diet in further relations and cooperation with the Islamic Consultative Majles. He also referred to the Persian Gulf crisis and expressed concern at the continuation of the presence of foreign forces in the region. He announced Japan's support for the efforts of the Islamic Republic of Iran and a number of Persian Gulf states for the establishment of peace and tranquility in that region.

Mr. Karrubi said: Reconstruction is currently continuing in Iran and it is expected that Japan will play a more active role in its cooperation in order to remove any executive obstacles in that regard.

Mr. Karrubi also stressed that the Persian Gulf region countries should maintain the security and tranquillity of the region and that foreign forces should completely pull out of the region. He called on Japan to make efforts in that regard. [passage omitted]

Oil Minister Reportedly Calls For May Conference

NC0603203491 Paris AFP in English 1450 GMT 6 Mar 91

[Text] Tehran, March 6 (AFP)—Iran has invited the world's oil producers and oil consumers to a conference in May to discuss the future of the oil market after the Gulf crisis, Iranian Oil Minister Golam Reza Aqazadeh said Wednesday.

Those invited include the oil ministers of the 13 members of the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), and the energy ministers from non-OPEC producers, he said.

Non-OPEC countries include the Soviet Union, Britain, Norway, and Mexico.

Representatives of major oil consumers and foreign oil companies would also be invited.

The meeting is to be held from May 27 to 29 at Esfahan, south of Tehran, he said.

Mr. Aqazadeh said he was generally optimistic about the future of the oil market and price stability, but warned that it still required "close cooperation and mutual comprehension between producer and consumer countries."

The announcement came after growing pressure for international consultations to make the market more stable, after prices rode a roller-coaster following Iraq's August 2 invasion of Kuwait.

In February, the executive director of the International Energy Agency (IEA), Helga Steeg, called for postwar talks in order to stabilise the market and enable long-term investment in the energy sector.

The IEA includes major consumers such as Japan, Germany, the United States, and France.

Mr. Aqazadeh, in other comments, said a meeting in Vienna on Monday [4 march] of OPEC's market monitoring committee "could be transformed into a summit of the 13 OPEC ministers."

The meeting is scheduled to look at the perspectives for supply and demand over the next quarter. But it "will also feature the question of the lack of production by Iraq and Kuwait," he said.

Exports from both countries were frozen by international embargo four days after the Iraqi invasion. Kuwait is now free to trade, but its oilfields were devastated by departing Iraqi troops, and it is expected to take years before its output fully recovers.

In the meantime, the two countries' production quota in OPEC has been shared among other members of the organisation.

Vice President Habibi Departs for Damascus

NC0703052491 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 0430 GMT 7 Mar 91

[Text] First Vice President Mr. Hasan Habibi left Tehran for Damascus this morning. Our correspondent reports that in remarks at Tehran airport before his departure, he said that the objective of this visit is to continue the exchange of views with Syrian officials and to hold discussions on problems of the Persian Gulf area. Mr. Habibi also expressed concern at the dangers that may threaten Iraq's territorial integrity and emphasized the importance of the security of Iraq's borders and of the region.

Damascus Declaration Said To Lack 'Broad Base'

LD0603185491 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1121 GMT 6 Mar 91

[Unattributed station commentary]

[Excerpts] The second meeting of the conference of eight Arab countries, comprising the six Arab littoral states of the Persian Gulf as well as Syria and Egypt, prepared a plan yesterday according to which a new form of political, economic, and security cooperation will take shape among Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Bahrain, Oman, Syria, and Egypt.

The preparation of the final text of the plan, which will apparently replace an earlier unsuccessful project by the Persian Gulf Cooperation Council, will allow these eight Arab countries to experiment with a new plan—a plan which must logically pave the way for expanded cooperation to bring about peace and stability for the six rich countries of the region through the use of the military power of Egypt and Syria. [passage omitted]

A security plan for the region, especially when it comes in the aftermath of a destructive war between the multinational forces and Iraq, must cast a comprehensive glance, with foresight, at the chronic and fundamental problems of the region if it is to leave no ground for the subsequent emergence of differences and hostile confrontation among these countries.

An efficient plan must first take account of the region's inherent political, economic, and social capabilities before it seeks to cater for extra-regional considerations and demands.

In the view of some experts, however, the Damascus Declaration, which has been prepared with due regard to the alignment of the region's governments in the recent war, is not fully compatible with the pressing needs [of the region] for present and future security. Moreover, if we consider the agonies which the people of the region have gone through in recent years as a result of interference by foreigners, then the shortcomings of the plan prepared by the foreign ministers of the eight Arab countries are even more obvious.

No doubt, because of the special economic and geopolitical characteristics of the Persian Gulf region, the restoration of security in that region will plan a determining role in world politics and economics. That was why the huge military operation in the region was enforced. However, the existence of a system for solving differences like those between the governments of Iraq and Kuwait prior to the crisis, and the inefficiency of the quasi-systems of the past must not bring about the presumption that security in the region in its real sense is at variance with the security of the interests of others. [sentence as heard]

Although, in the periphery of the efforts of the said eight Arab countries preparing the said plan, there is no suggestion that the region's security arrangements would imply the existence of an axis for hostility to the forces of the non-participant countries, yet it is obvious that in the mind of some of the original countries preparing the plan, as well as their supporters, the presence of other countries in the said security system cannot be compatible with the objectives of other countries. Indeed one must say that the preparation of plans which are not properly broad-based will ultimately be to the detriment of all the countries of the region. It seems that the plan prepared in Damascus lacks such a broad base. And as such it is hardly possible for it to have a better fate than that of the Persian Gulf Cooperation Council.

Majles Warns Against Foreign Intervention in Iraq

LD0603161491 Tehran IRNA in English 1521 GMT 6 Mar 91

[Text] Tehran, Mar. 6, IRNA—The Foreign Policy Commission of Iran's Islamic Consultative Assembly (Majles) Wednesday warned against intervention in the internal affairs of Iraq by any foreign country.

In a communique on the topic it said the right for political self-determination rests with the people of Iraq

and not with any foreign power. It also called on the foreign troops in the Persian Gulf to evacuate the region as soon as possible.

The Foreign Policy Commission of Iran's Majles said the continued presence in the region of the coalition forces is itself a cause for insecurity and unrest in the region.

The communique said the heads of state of the multinational forces had repeatedly declared earlier that they would not procrastinate their stay in the Persian Gulf, and noted "Now it is time the leaders of the multinational forces proved that they were committed to their own promises."

The Majles commission also emphasized on the implementation of Paragraph Eight of the U.N. Security Council Resolution 598 which recognizes the rights of the Persian Gulf states for maintaining the security of the Persian Gulf with the supervision of the U.N. Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar.

Commentary Says U.S. Must Withdraw From Region

NC0603234891 Tehran International Service in Arabic 1754 GMT 6 Mar 91

[Station commentary]

[Text] At a time when events are escalating inside Iraq, the U.S. forces that are present in the occupied Iraqi territories seek to exploit the situation to achieve Washington's expansionist objectives. The Americans, who previously said they would withdraw from the occupied Iraqi territories immediately after the signing of the cease-fire agreement, are now saying that their phased withdrawal from one-sixth of Iraqi territory depends on developments in the situation. The U.S. Administration, which several times after World War II and in various parts of the world has exposed its aggressive and expansionist nature, this time seeks to fabricate justifications and pretexts in the Middle East, despite the fact that the pretext of the liberation of Kuwait was foiled following the Iraqi withdrawal from this country, in order to remain in the region to guarantee U.S. interests.

In this regard, the U.S. Administration has ignored past experiences that prove that the region's Muslims will not remain idle toward any U.S. interference in their affairs. The great majority of political observers believe that the United States has come to the region to guarantee energy supplies and to defend the regimes that revolve in its orbit. Based on this, and although the war has ended, U.S. forces will stay in the region until American objectives are achieved. Amid these developments, the United States did not hesitate to officially announce that it desires to topple Saddam Husayn's government—the very same government that America and its allies a few years ago armed to the teeth.

It is clear that America seeks to avoid its past erroneous policy toward Saddam Husayn without taking into account the present facts, by adopting means and policies that are this time more erroneous. The U.S. Administration knows full well that the nineties, which is an extension of the eighties, will witness a new cycle in the growth of the Islamic movement. If America insists on continuing its expansionist and aggressive policies, benefiting from the factors of political, military, and economic pressures, then it will certainly face large-scale popular opposition in the Middle East. If the ideas and plans that are proposed by the White House ignore the balance of powers in the region, then they certainly will face a formidable failure. The best option and policy the U.S. Administration should adopt, before it is too late, is to withdraw American forces from the region as soon as possible, and to leave all the issues pertaining to the region's security and future to the region's countries themselves. Through practical experience it has been proven that all the tragedies the region has witnessed for a century have basically been the result of foreign interference in its countries' affairs.

Commentary Urges Gulf Regional Security System

LD0703103991 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 0740 GMT 7 Mar 91

[Station commentary from the "Holy Defense" program]

[Text] The Persian Gulf crisis and war, which because of its ramifications and dangerous, expansionist nature had endangered international peace and security, has ended and ,hus once again the strategic Persian Gulf region is calm. The recent crisis, which occurred soon after the Iraqi regime's aggression against the Islamic Republic of Iran ended, was itself the result of Iraq's aggression and quest for hegemony. In both the recent and distant past the dangers of such expansionism have posed various threats to the region's stability. It is natural and necessary that some measure is considered for preventing a repetition of those dangers.

It should also be noted that, apart from the heavy human and material losses that these aggressions caused the people of the region, the aggressors achieved nothing and have ultimately had to retreat while sacrificing a tremendous number of their forces. Meanwhile, when the costly but valuable past experience is considered, the establishment of an efficient regional security system is deemed the best solution to stop aggressors in the future.

In this regard the Islamic Republic of Iran believes that such a system must be established with the participation of all the regional states. This means that governments outside the region, especially hegemonist governments, cannot assume a role in these treaties [as heard] or even participate in the formulation of its framework. In reality, the security of the region belongs to the people of the region themselves, and it has to be those people and states that can and must build the appropriate security system in the region.

Paper Ponders Saddam's 'Blunders,' Future

LD0703102291 Tehran IRNA in English 0834 GMT 7 Mar 91

[Text] Tehran, March 7, IRNA—Baghdad's surrender to the conditions of the U.S.-led allied forces brought humiliation for Iraqis and Saddam Husayn will hardly be able to compensate for his political blunders and misconducts, said 'KAYHAN INTERNATIONAL' daily Thursday.

Underlining that "in the past 11 years the Iraqi leadership has dragged Iraq into two devastating wars with no result," the editorial in the English daily said "the past record of the Ba'th Party is full of dark pages" particularly after 1968 coup which killed "thousands of political opponents who ranged from Muslim activists to Kurdish guerrillas."

Referring to the popular uprising against the Ba'th party and the person of Saddam Husayn in Iraq following its defeat in the Persian Gulf war, the paper said that the regime faces two major challenges: Muslim activists mainly Shiites in Iraqi southern cities and Kurds in northern Iraq.

"Washington is eagerly waiting to see the ultimate downfall and probably the assassination of Saddam Husayn. But whatever the political outcome of the current crisis in the Persian Gulf, it will be surely a defeat for Washington's foreign policy in the region."

"If Saddam succeeds to suppress the popular uprising against his regime and remains in power, despite the military defeat he faced from the West, he has morally won a war against Washington-led coalition mainly because of his ability to remain in power against the victorious allies' will."

The paper stressed that the future government in Baghdad will be an anti-U.S. Regime if the Iraqi people succeed to eject Saddam out of Iraq and concluded that the question that the Iraqi president faces now is "to be or not to be."

Efforts To Install Pro-West Rule in Iraq Viewed

LD0703100491 Tehran IRNA in English 0838 GMT 7 Mar 91

[Text] Tehran, March 7, IRNA—The Persian daily "JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI" said Thursday that the Western powers are trying to install a pro-Western government in Iraq to protect their interests as well as the interests of the reactionary governments of the region.

JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI said while the people in various parts of Iraq are rising against their government, the Western media are trying to attribute the internal unrest in that country to the Islamic Republic. It said the Western governments are insinuating the idea in order to justify their intended plan of suppressing popular and Islamic-oriented uprisings in the region.

It said the West now does not count on Saddam Husayn as a personality worthy of survival even though he should degenerate into a harmless element. "Obviously the West is considering a replacement for government in Baghdad. But who can believe the West will agree to the coming to power of a popular and Islamic government based on the will of the masses?"

The daily said it would be difficult to predict the form of the future government in Iraq, though at the same time it is likely that "despite the entirety of the efforts of satanic powers and their regional satellites, the people of Iraq will shortly make their crucial choice, and the will of God shall dominate the will of man."

Pakistan

Prime Minister's Defense Adviser Resigns

BK0703023691 Hong Kong AFP in English 1834 GMT 7 Mar 91

[Text] Islamabad, March 6 (AFP)—The defence advisor to Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif has resigned, official sources here said Wednesday, but did not give the reason for the move by Syed Ijlal Haider Zaidi.

Sheikh Rashid Ahmed, an aide to the prime minister, implicity confirmed the resignation by telling reporters "I do not contradict it."

He said Mr. Sharif had received some reports about Mr. Zaidi, an advisor since the government was formed in November, but declined to elaborate.

Recent press reports had linked the official to a scandal concerning the poor construction of a runway at Lahore Airport due to alleged financial irregularities in the project.

Nawaz Sharif 'Cautious' on Adopting Shari'a Bill

BK0703052091 Hong Kong AFP in English 0437 GMT 7 Mar 91

[By Shah Alam]

[Text] Islamabad, March 7 (AFP)—Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif has charted a cautious course in enforcing Islamic law in Pakistan, to the annoyance of fundamentalists in his ruling alliance, analysts said Wednesday.

Mr. Sharif's tentative approach reflects reservations that have blocked the adoption of a controversial Shariah, or Islamic law bill since it was first proposed during the rule of the late president Mohammad Ziaul Haq about a decade ago, they said.

The bill was shelved by Ziaul-nominated former prime minister Mohammad Khan Junejo in 1985 because of sectarian controversy and opposition from liberal and women's rights groups.

Former premier Benazir Bhutto shelved the bill for similar reasons during her 20-month rule before her dismissal in August 1990.

During the run up to the October 1990 elections, Mr. Sharif's Islamic Democratic Alliance (IJI) vowed to pass the bill as a priority if voted into power.

But he explained his about-turn to a parliamentary meeting recently, saying haste in passing the bill could create deep divisions in society, which Pakistan could ill-afford, according to an official report of the meeting released Wednesday.

The prime minister, the report said, reiterated his firm commitment to Shariah legislation but stressed at the same time the need for a "consensus" on the subject.

Mr. Sharif cautioned that "half-baked" measures could lead to problems and that he wanted to carry along all sections of society to ensure the smooth implementation of Shariah, according to the report.

He did not indicate when the government proposed to present a consensus Shariah bill to the parliament.

A fundamentalist religious leader, Maulana Mohammad Abdus Sattar Khan Niazi, resigned from Mr. Sharif's cabinet on Monday citing differences over the Shariah issue and the government's Gulf policy.

Mr. Niazi accused the prime minister breaking his election promise in delaying passage of a Shariah bill.

After taking power in November, Mr. Sharif appointed a committee under Mr. Niazi to suggest amendments to the draft bill in consultation with different groups.

Shiite moslems, who make up 20 per cent of the country's 110 million people, argue that their views must be incorporated to achieve a consensus.

Legal experts say the country's constitution provides enough guarantees for all laws to be in conformity with islamic injunctions and thus there is no need for a Shariah bill.

According to some lawyers, the original draft contains provisions that will erode the sovereignty of parliament and generate constitutional and legal complications.

The controversial draft allows the Ulema, or religious scholars, to strike out any law that contravenes the Shariah.

It also envisages what it describes as the "Islamization" of the economy, education and the media.

Women's organizations have opposed the proposed legislation for fear that theocratic measures will push women backwards in society.

Some Western diplomats here said Mr. Sharif's liberal economic policies and backing for the multinational forces in the Gulf had earned Pakistan international support and goodwill recently.

But they said any drift towards religious radicalism could send out negatives signals that might sour relations with the West.

Release of Indian Politician's Daughter Urged

BK0703025091 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu 0200 GMT 7 Mar 91

[Text] A spokesman of the Pakistan Governor has appealed to the Jammu and Kashmir Students Liberation Front in occupied Kashmir to release Mrs. Nahid Imitiaz, the abducted daughter of the Indian politician. According to ASSOCIATED PRESS OF PAKISTAN, the spokesman said the abduction of Mrs. Nahid Imtiaz is prejudicial to Islam and human values.